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THE HAUNTED HOMES

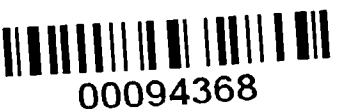
AND

FAMILY TRADITIONS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

Second Series.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PREFACE.

THE favourable reception accorded to my compilation entitled THE HAUNTED HOMES AND FAMILY TRADITIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN, encouraged me to continue my researches in Ghostland. The present collection is the result. This SECOND SERIES of supernatural stories is far less largely derived from previously published volumes than is the first, and in the various instances (always carefully acknowledged) where printed information has been obtained, it has been largely supplemented by corroborative particulars derived from private and personal sources.

My application to the public through the columns of our leading critical journal, for reference to instances of dwellings bearing the reputation of being haunted, coupled with widely-circulated inquiries among members of various antiquarian and learned provincial societies, invoked an extensive correspondence in proof that the number of buildings still regarded as so troubled is far

larger than is generally supposed. Unfortunately, only a small proportion of the stories communicated to me can be given: many are too fragmentary; some too uninteresting; others refer too directly to living persons; whilst in several instances, owners of "Haunted Homes" object strongly to publication of the circumstances which so distinguish their dwellings, or their families, from those of their more commonplace neighbours.

This SECOND SERIES may not claim to have exhausted the subject, but it will serve to render somewhat more comprehensive my guide to the haunted buildings of Great Britain; and in placing it in the hands of the public which received the first series so kindly, there is now no need for me to do aught further than tender my warm thanks to the many correspondents who have aided my researches, and to those noblemen and gentlemen who have not only answered my inquiries, but have kindly permitted me to make use of private information concerning their households and their homes.

JOHN H. INGRAM.

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THE HAUNTED HOMES

AND

FAMILY TRADITIONS

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

ALTHORP.

ALTHORP, the magnificent Northamptonshire seat of Earl Spencer, has been the residence of its proprietors from the "olden time," as Baker says, in his history of the county. The simplicity of its exterior is fully compensated by the attractions within: its magnificent library is one of the wonders of England, and its superb collection of paintings another. Since Althorp has been in possession of the Spencers it has been honoured by two royal visits; the first was paid by the Queen and the elder son of James the First, and the second by William the Third, in 1695, when a large gathering

of the nobility and gentry of the county took place in honour of the event.

That a residence of the antiquity and importance of Althorp should have a ghost is nothing unusual; if, indeed, it had several it need not be a matter of wonder, as such things go. The apparition which is connected with Earl Spencer's palatial dwelling, however, is not of the character one generally finds connected with places of that rank, nor are we aware that it habitually haunts the place, but it is so remarkable an instance of ghost-seeing, related to us on such good authority, that is well worth record here.

Mr. (afterwards Archdeacon) Drury was invited by Lord and Lady Lyttleton to accompany them on a visit to Earl Spencer, the lady's father, then at Althorp. After dinner Mr. Drury and Lord Lyttleton amused themselves with billiards, and continued so late at their game that at last one of the servants went to them to request that when they went to bed they would extinguish the lights themselves. He asked them to be very careful in doing so, as Lord Spencer was always uneasy about fire. Looking at their watches, they were amazed to find that it was past two, and both of them went to bed without further delay.

Mr. Drury was awakened from his slumbers by the reflection of a light falling on his face; opening his eyes, he beheld at the foot of his bed a man dressed as a stable-man, in striped shirt and flat cap, and carrying a lantern with the bull's-eye turned full upon the disturbed sleeper.

"What do you want, my man? Is the house on fire?" exclaimed Mr. Drury; but he received no reply, his visitor remaining silent and immovable.

"What do you mean by coming into a gentleman's room in the middle of the night? What business have you here?" he demanded, but, unable to elicit any response, became more imperious in his remarks, bidding the fellow be gone as an impudent scoundrel, whose conduct should be reported to his master.

The figure then slowly lowered the lantern and passed into the dressing-room, from which there was no other means of exit than that by which he had entered.

"You won't be able to get out that way," Mr. Drury called out, and then, overcome by drowsiness, he dropped off to sleep again, without even waiting to see the result.

Next morning Mr. Drury remarked to Lady Lyttleton that it was a very odd thing, but a stable-man had walked into his room in the middle of the night, and would not go away for some long time, adding, "I suppose the man was drunk, but he did not look so"; and he then proceeded to describe his dress and general appearance.

Lady Lyttleton turned pale. "You have described," she said, "my father's favourite groom, who died a fortnight ago, and whose duty it was to go round the house after everyone had gone to bed, to see that the lights were extinguished, and with strict orders to enter any room where one was seen burning."

Mr. Drury's feelings may be imagined, and that he

never slept in that room again alone will readily be assumed; but whether he, or anyone else at Althorp, ever beheld the apparition of the dead groom again is another matter, about which we are unable to furnish any information.

ASHLEY HALL.

In a work styled *News from the Invisible World*, purporting to be a collection of remarkable narratives on "the certainty of supernatural visitations," by "T. Ottway," is given an account of certain marvellous occurrences which are stated to have taken place at "Ashley Park," Cheshire. This Ashley Park would appear to be identical with Ashley Hall, and the "Mannerings" of the narratives but another name for the Merediths, whose country seat the Hall once was. Ottway's account, which has been followed here, was derived from someone at Cambridge University, but his name and position are untold.

Ashley Hall, it may be premised, is somewhat more than a mile south-east of Bowdon, and is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Bollen. According to the description given in Omerod's *History of Cheshire*, the exterior is stuccoed, and finished with gables; the interior contains an old entrance-hall, and a variety of

apartments, more or less altered, but retaining, in general, an air of respectable antiquity.

The story which I am about to relate, says our authority, has reference to a subject often discussed and little understood—the connection which exists between this shifting scene and the world of spirits. "It is of little import to the reader," the narrator opines, "whether I am a sceptic or a convert to the theory. It may be more material for him to be assured that he is troubled with the details on the authority of one whose fortitude I have often witnessed, and for whose veracity I could pledge my own. I give the story, as nearly as I can recollect, in her own words."

"You know the Manneringss of Cheshire, and remember their seat, Ashley Park. It was when I had just left school that I accompanied my intimate friend, Miss Mannering, on a visit to her mother at Ashley. Mrs. Mannering was a widow, blessed with an ample fortune and great animal spirits, who laughed, and ate, and talked, and played the kind hostess, and delighted in seeing everyone happy about her; who thanked God that she had 'not a nerve in her body'; and hoped she should die as she had lived—comfortably. The house was crowded with company, and Mrs. M. made an apology for being obliged to assign to me, as my bedchamber, the 'Cedar Room.' It was a large, fine, old apartment, wainscotted with cedar, and, from there being a door at each end of it, which led to different parts of the house, had, on high days and holidays, been used as an ante-chamber. There were no old pictures, no Gothic

furniture, no tapestry, to predispose the imagination to superstitious feelings, or to foster in the mind melancholy forebodings.

"The windows were sashed—the fire-place good, but neither Gothic nor over-large—and the room itself, though of unusual dimensions, had the appearance of antiquity, unaccompanied by anything sombre. We had been dancing, and I went to bed in high spirits. It was between two and three in the morning, when I awoke with a start, and saw distinctly a female figure pass through my room. I enquired without fear who was there. There was no answer. The figure proceeded slowly onwards, and disappeared at the door. It struck me as being singular, but, knowing the house to be filled with company, and that the greater part were strangers to the endless labyrinth of staircase and ante-room which overrun the mansion, I concluded some heedless guest had mistaken my chamber, or that one of the servants, forgetting the circumstance of its being inhabited, had literally put it to its old use—a passage-room. At all events, thought I, it will be cleared up at breakfast; and without feeling any alarm, or attaching any importance to the incident, I struck the hour by my watch, and fell asleep. The next morning I was somewhat startled by finding both the doors locked on the inside, and by recollecting with what care I had turned the key the preceding evening. The breakfast-bell, however, disturbed the train of my ruminations. I hurried hastily down-stairs, and thought no more on the subject. In the course of conversation, my kind hostess inquired

how I had slept. 'Very soundly,' said I, 'except that I was rather surprised by someone who, no doubt by mistake, passed through my room at two this morning.' Mrs. Mannering looked earnestly at me, seemed on the point of asking me a question, checked herself, and turned away.

"The next night I went to bed earlier, and, at nearly the same hour, the figure appeared. But there was no doubt *now* upon my mind. On this occasion I saw the face. Its pale countenance, its large, melancholy black eyes, its step noiseless as it glided over the oaken floor, gave me a sensation that I can never forget. Terrified as I was, I fixed my eyes on it. It stood before me—then slowly receded; when it reached the middle of the room, stopped—and while I looked at it, *was not*. I own it affected me strangely. Sleep for the remainder of the night was impossible. And though I endeavoured to fortify my mind by recollecting all I had heard and read against the theory, to persuade myself that it was illusion, and that I should see no more of it, I half determined to conclude my visit at once, or, at all events, to change my room immediately. Morning came—bright sunny morning—and the race-ball of the morrow, and a dread of the ridicule which would follow my determination, overpowered my resolution. I was silent, and—I stayed.

"The third night came. I confess, as the evening drew in, I shuddered at the idea of going to bed. I made excuses; I talked over the events of the night; I played; I sang; I frittered away minute after minute; and so well did my stratagem succeed, that two, the

dreaded hour, was past long ere I entered my room. I admit, that had I retired to rest, on the first evening of my visit at Ashley, with the impressions that, in spite of myself, forced themselves upon me in this, imagination might then have claimed a part in what I witnessed. But the feelings were wholly distinct. On the first night I had seen nothing—knew nothing. On this, I was steeling my mind against the worst.

"After a determined and minute investigation of the room, after a thorough examination of every closet and corner, after barring and bolting each door with a beating heart, a woman's fears (shall I confess it?) stole over me; and, hastily flinging myself on the bed, I muffled up my face entirely in the clothes. After lying in this manner for two hours in a state of agony that baffles all description, I ventured to cast a hurried glance around the room. It must be, I thought, near daybreak. It was so; but by my side stood the figure —her form bent over me, her face so close to mine that I could have touched it; her white drapery leaning over me, so that my slightest motion would have discomposed it. I looked again, to convince myself that it was no deception, and—have no recollection of anything further.

"When I came to myself it was nearly noon. The servants and, indeed, Mrs. Mannering herself had repeatedly knocked at the door, and, receiving no answer, were unwilling to disturb me. My kind hostess was alone in the breakfast-room when I entered, and was preparing to rally me on my early hours, when, evi-

dently struck by my appearance, she inquired if I was well. 'Not particularly,' said I, faintly; 'and, if you will allow me, I return home this morning.' She looked at me in silence for some moments, and then said with emphasis, 'Have you any particular reason? Nay, I am sure you have,' she continued, as her keen, penetrating eyes detected an involuntary tremor. 'I have no concealments,' was my reply, and immediately I detailed the whole transaction. She heard me gravely, without interruption, or expressing any surprise. 'I am grieved, beyond measure, my dear young friend, for the event; I certainly have heard strange and unaccountable stories about that room; but I always treated them as idle tales, quite unworthy of credit. This is the first time for years it has been occupied, and I shall never cease to reproach myself for having tried the experiment. But, for God's sake!' she added, 'don't mention it. Assure me, promise me, you will not breathe a syllable on the subject to any living being. If, among these ignorant and superstitious people, the inexplicable occurrence should once get wind, not a servant would stay with me.' I assented; and on all her offers of a different room, pressing entreaties to remain, and promises of fresh arrangements, I put a decided negative. Home I returned that morning.

"A long interval elapsed before I again visited Ashley. Miss Mannering, my kind and warm-hearted friend, had sunk into an early grave, and I had had, in the interim, to stem the torrent of affliction, and buffet with its waves. At length, a most pressing and per-

sonal invitation brought me under Mrs. Mannering's roof. There I found her sister, who, with three young children, were laughing and revelling away their Christmas. Lady Pierrepoint was one of those fortunate women who, by dint of undaunted assurance, and, as Poor Richard informed his friends, 'an unparalleled tongue,' had contrived to have her own way through life. Her first exploit, on coming to Ashley, was to fix upon the cedar-room for the children. In vain poor Mrs. Mannering pointed out its faults. She 'was afraid they would find it cold.' Her ladyship 'wished them to be hardy.' 'It was out of the way.' 'So much the better; their noise would not be troublesome.' 'I fear ——' went on Mrs. Mannering. 'Don't know what it is,' said Lady Pierrepoint. 'In short,' she continued, with her imperturbable face, 'this room or none.' And Mrs. Mannering, not daring to avow the real cause of her fears, yet feeling that further contest was useless, saw, with feelings of horror, the little cribs and rocking horses, nurses and nine-pins, formally established in the dreaded apartment.

"Things went on very smoothly for a fortnight. No complaints of the cedar-room transpired, and Mrs. Mannering was congratulating herself on the happy turn affairs had taken, when, one day, on her going into the nursery, she saw her little nephews busily engaged in packing up their playthings. 'What, are you tired of Ashley, and going to leave me?' 'Oh, no; but we are going to hide away our toys from the White Lady. She came last night, and Sunday night. And she had

such large black eyes, and she stood close by our cribs—just here, aunt. Who is she, do you know? for Fred says she never speaks. What does she do here, and what does she want?'

"'What a wretched, miserable woman I am!' cried the panic-stricken Mrs. Mannering. 'Every hope I had entertained of this abominable affair is dashed to the ground for ever; and if, by any chance, Lady Pierrepoint should discover—— Oh, they must be moved directly. Ring the bell! Where's the housekeeper? I'll give no reason—I'll *have* no reason. Oh, Mannering! to what sorrows have you not exposed your widow!' In spite of all inquiries, interrogatories, and surmises, moved the little Pierrepoints were that very evening. Our precautions, however, were all but defeated; for one of the little magpies began after dinner: 'Mamma, I've something to tell you about the White Lady.' He was instantly crammed almost to suffocation with sweetmeats. The rest were very shortly trundled out of the room, choking with *bon-bons*. And I shall never forget the piteous expression of Mrs. Mannering's countenance, as she passed me with her party, or her declaration: 'God forgive me! but I see very clearly this White Lady will put me in my grave.'

"The room was then shut up for some years, and I can give no account of what passed at Ashley in the interim. The last time I was there was on the day on which young Mannering came of age. His mother had been receiving the loud and rustic, but not, on that account, the less sincere, congratulations of the tenants

on the lawn, when she was told her more courtly visitors were awaiting her in the drawing-room. On this occasion the sins of the cedar-room were forgotten, and it was once more used as an ante-chamber. To enter it, throw off her shawl and bonnet, and run to a large swing-glass which stood near a window, was the work of an instant. She was hastily adjusting her dress, when she started, for she saw—reflected at full length in the glass beside her—the figure of the White Lady!

"It was days before the brain-fever, which her fright and her fall brought on, would allow her to give any connected account of what, till then, appeared an inexplicable occurrence. Her reason and recollection gradually returned, but her health—never. A few weeks afterwards she quitted Ashley Park for—the grave!"

BAGLEY HOUSE.

In an interesting paper on "Devonshire Ghosts," contributed by Miss Billington to *Merry England*, for August 1883, is an account of Bagley House, near Bridport, a well-known haunted building. About this old residence various ghostly legends have clustered, but Miss Billington refers mainly to a traditional Squire Lighte. This worthy was formerly owner of Bagley.

"He had been hunting one day," says our authority, "and after reaching home had gone away again and drowned himself. His groom had followed him with a presentiment that something was wrong, and arrived at the pond in time to see the end of the tragedy. As he returned, he was accosted by the spirit of his drowned master, which unhorsed him. He soon fell violently ill, and never recovered; one of the consequences of this illness being that his skin peeled entirely off! Shortly after Squire Lighte's suicide his whole house was troubled with noisy disturbances which were at once associated with the evil deed of self-destruction. It was suggested that the spirit should be formally and duly 'laid' or exorcised. A number of the clergy went, therefore, for that purpose, and succeeded in inducing the ghost to confine itself to a chimney in the house for a certain number of years; it is not known exactly now for how long.

"For many years after this, however, the place remained at peace; but on the expiration of the power of the charm, very much worse disturbances broke out again. Raps would be heard at the front door; steps in the passage and on the stairs, doors opening and closing. The rustle of ladies dressed in silk was audible in the drawing-room, and from that room the sound was traced into a summer-house in the garden. The crockery would all be violently moved, and at certain rare intervals a male figure, dressed in old-fashioned costume, is said to have made itself visible and walked about the house. The neighbours say that these extraordinary

occurrences continued for many years. They believe in them most firmly, and are of opinion that as long as the house stands it will be thus troubled."

BERRY POMEROY CASTLE.

BERRY POMEROY CASTLE is situated in the midst of some of the most beautiful scenery of Devonshire. Its remains are very extensive and imposing, and attract many visitors from Torquay and neighbourhood. Artists are especially drawn to the place by its well-deserved reputation for presenting eligible points of view for study. The ruin consists of a mass of late Tudor buildings, grouped around an inner court, and surrounded by an escarped bank of great height. There is but one approach; a gateway with spaces for two portcullises, and two flanking towers. The walls are clad with ivy; and trees, almost as ancient as the castle itself, are scattered about the grounds. The picturesque beauty of the situation is heightened and completed by the river, which winds round the charming ruins. With this delightful spot a terrible tragedy is connected, the details of which have been given to us in some such words as these:

Somewhat more than a century ago, Dr. Walter Farquhar, who was created a baronet in 1796, made a temporary sojourn in Torquay. This physician was

quite a young man at that time and had not acquired the reputation which, after his settlement in London, procured him the confidence and even friendship of royalty. One day, during his stay in Devon, he was summoned professionally to Berry Pomeroy Castle, a portion of which building was still occupied by a steward and his wife. The latter was seriously ill, and it was to see her that he had been called in. Previous to seeing his patient Dr. Farquhar was shown into an outer apartment and requested to remain there until she was prepared to see him. This apartment was large and ill-proportioned; around it ran richly-carved panels of oak that age had changed to the hue of ebony. The only light in the room was admitted through the chequered panes of a gorgeously-stained window, in which were emblazoned the arms of the former lords of Berry Pomeroy. In one corner, to the right of the wide fire-place, says the narrative attributed to the doctor, was a flight of dark oaken steps, forming part of a staircase leading apparently to some chamber above; and on these stairs the fading gleams of summer's twilight shone through.

While Dr. Farquhar wondered, and, if the truth be told, chafed at the delay which had been interposed between him and his patient, the door opened, and a female somewhat richly dressed entered the apartment. He, supposing her to be one of the family, advanced to meet her. Unheeding him she crossed the room with a hurried step, wringing her hands, and exhibiting by her motions the deepest distress. When she reached the foot of the stairs, she paused for an instant, and then

began to ascend them with the same hasty step and agitated demeanour. As she reached the highest stair the light fell strongly on her features, and displayed a countenance, youthful, indeed, and beautiful, but in which vice and despair strove for mastery. "If ever human face," to use the doctor's own words, "exhibited agony and remorse; if ever eye, that index of the soul, portrayed anguish uncheered by hope, and suffering without interval; if ever features betrayed that within the wearer's bosom there dwelt a hell, those features and that being were then present to me."

Before he could make up his mind on the nature of this strange occurrence, he was summoned to the bedside of his patient. He found the lady so ill as to require his undivided attention, and had no opportunity, and in fact no wish, to ask any questions which bore on a different subject to her illness.

But on the following morning, when he repeated his visit, and found the sufferer materially better, he communicated what he had witnessed to the husband, and expressed a wish for some explanation. The steward's countenance fell during the physician's narrative, and at its close he mournfully ejaculated:

"My poor wife! my poor wife!"

"Why, how does this relation affect her?"

"Much, much!" replied the steward, vehemently. "That it should have come to this! I cannot—cannot lose her! You know not," he continued in a milder tone, "the strange, sad history; and—and his lordship is extremely averse to any allusion being ever made to

the circumstance, or any importance attached to it; but I must and will out with it! The figure which you saw is supposed to represent the daughter of a former baron of Berry Pomeroy, who bore a child to her own father. In that chamber above us the fruit of their incestuous intercourse was strangled by its guilty mother; and whenever death is about to visit the inmates of the castle she is seen wending her way to the scene of her crimes with the frenzied gestures you describe. The day my son was drowned she was observed; and now my wife!"

"I assure you she is better. The most alarming symptoms have given way, and all immediate danger is at an end."

"I have lived in and near the castle thirty years," was the steward's desponding reply, "and never knew the omen fail."

"Arguments on omens are absurd," said the doctor, rising to take his leave. "A few days, however, will, I trust, verify my prognostics, and see Mrs. S—— recovered."

They parted mutually dissatisfied. The lady died at noon.

Many years intervened and brought with them many changes. The doctor rose rapidly and deservedly into repute; became the favourite physician and even personal friend of the Prince Regent, was created a baronet, and ranked among the highest authorities in the medical world.

When he was at the zenith of his professional career,

a lady called on him to consult him about her sister, whom she described as sinking, overcome, and heart-broken, by a supernatural appearance.

"I am aware of the apparent absurdity of the details which I am about to give," she began, "but the case will be unintelligible to you, Sir Walter, without them. While residing at Torquay last summer, we drove over one morning to visit the splendid remains of Berry Pomeroy Castle. The steward was very ill at the time (he died, in fact, while we were going over the ruins), and there was some difficulty in getting the keys. While my brother and I went in search of them, my sister was left alone for a few moments in a large room on the ground-floor; and while there—most absurd fancy!—she has persuaded herself she saw a female enter and pass her in a state of indescribable distress. This spectre, I suppose I must call her, horribly alarmed her. Its features and gestures have made an impression, she says, which no time can efface. I am well aware of what you will say, that nothing can possibly be more preposterous. We have tried to rally her out of it, but the more heartily we laugh at her folly, the more agitated and excited does she become. In fact, I fear we have aggravated her disorder by the scorn with which we have treated it. For my own part, I am satisfied her impressions are erroneous, and arise entirely from a depraved state of the bodily organs. We wish for your opinion; and are most anxious you should visit her without delay."

"Madam, I will make a point of seeing your sister

immediately; but it is no delusion. This I think it proper to state most positively, and previous to any interview. I, myself, saw the same figure, under somewhat similar circumstances, and about the same hour of the day; and I should decidedly oppose any raillery or incredulity being expressed on the subject in your sister's presence."

Sir Walter saw the young lady next day, and after being for a short time under his care she recovered.

Our authority for the above account of how Berry Pomeroy Castle is haunted, derived it from Sir Walter Farquhar, who was a man even more noted for his probity and veracity than for his professional attainments, high as they were rated. The story has been told as nearly as possible in Sir Walter's own words.

BETTISCOMBE HOUSE.

THERE is a certain old farmstead known as Bettiscombe, or Bettiscombe House, in a parish of the same name, about six miles from Bridport, in Dorsetshire. This ancient dwelling, which is still inhabited, is celebrated for the so-called "Screaming Skull" that it contains. There are various versions of the cause and consequences of the malign influence exercised by this relic of humanity. Mr. William Andrews, in his essay on *Skull Superstitions*, states that the peculiar superstition attaching to the Bettiscombe skull is, "that if it be

brought out of the house, the house itself would rock to its foundations, while the perpetrator of such an act of desecration would certainly die within the year.

"Various changes of tenancy and furniture have been made" in the old homestead, says Mr. Andrews, "but the skull holds its place. It is not known when the 'ghastly tenant' first took up its abode in the place, but it has been there for a considerable period. The skull has been stated to be that of a negro; and the legend was that it belonged to a faithful black servant of an early possessor of the property—a Pinney, who, having lived abroad for some time, brought home this memento of his humble follower."

The tradition related by Mr. Andrews, however, is far too simple and conventional to satisfy the cravings of the hunter after hauntings; his premises are not tragic enough to account for such fearsome results; it is, therefore, comforting to learn that local legends impart a more gruesome aspect to the affair. It is needless to enter too closely into an investigation of the origin of the story: for most readers the following interesting account of a visit paid to the "screaming skull," will supply all that can be desired on the subject. In the August of 1883, Dr. Richard Garnett, of the British Museum, his daughter, and a friend, whilst staying at Charmouth, about seven or eight miles from Bettiscombe, hearing reports about the skull and its strange performances, determined to pay it a visit. The result of their expedition is thus told by Miss Garnett:—

"One fine afternoon a party of three adventurous

spirits started off, hoping to discover the skull and investigate its history. This much we knew, that the skull would only scream when it was buried, and so we hoped to get leave to inter it in the churchyard.

"The village of Bettiscombe was at length reached, and we found our way to the old farm-house, which stood at the end of the village by itself. It had evidently been a manor-house, and a very handsome one too. We were admitted into a fine paved hall, and attempted 'to break the ice' by asking for milk; we then endeavoured to draw the good woman of the house into conversation by admiring the place and asking, in a guarded manner, respecting the famous skull. On this subject she was most reserved; she had only lately taken the farm-house, and had been obliged to take possession of the skull also; but she did not wish us to suppose that she knew much about it, it was a veritable 'skeleton in the closet' to her. After exercising great diplomacy we persuaded her to allow us a sight of it. We tramped up the fine old oak staircase till we reached the top of the house, when, opening a cupboard door, she showed us a steep winding staircase leading to the roof, and from one of the steps the skull sat grinning at us. We took it in our hands and examined it carefully; it was very old and weather-beaten, and certainly human. The lower jaw was missing; the forehead very low and badly proportioned. One of our party, who was a medical student, examined it long and gravely, and then, after first telling the good woman that he was a doctor, pronounced it to be, in his opinion,

the skull of a negro. After this oracular utterance she resolved to make a clean breast of all she knew, which, however, did not amount to much. The skull, we were informed, was that of a negro servant, who had lived in the service of a Roman Catholic priest; some difference arose between them, but whether the priest murdered the servant in order to conceal some crimes known to the negro; or whether the negro, in a fit of passion, killed his master, did not clearly appear. However, the negro had declared before his death that his spirit would not rest unless his body was taken to his native land and buried there. This was not done, he being buried in the churchyard at Bettiscombe. Then the haunting began: fearful screams proceeded from the grave; the doors and windows of the house rattled and creaked; strange sounds were heard all over the house; in short, there was no rest for the inmates until the body was dug up. At different periods attempts were made to bury the body, but similar disturbances always recurred. In process of time the skeleton disappeared, all save the skull which we now saw before us.

"We were naturally extremely anxious to bury the skull, and remain in the house that night to see what would happen; but this request was indignantly refused, and we were promptly shown off the premises."

Therefore the reputation of "the Screaming Skull" of Bettiscombe House remains unimpaired.

BIRCHEN BOWER.

Most accounts of haunted dwellings are connected with, if, indeed, they are not derived from, some terrible tragedy. The legend of the old haunted house at Birchen Bower is, however, not without its comic element. As usual, gold is at the bottom of the story. Whatever amount of credence the reader may be willing to give to the sights and sounds declared to appertain to Birchen Bower, that some kind of hereditary trouble belongs to it can scarcely be denied, as the following particulars, derived chiefly from an article by Mr. James Dronsfield, in the *Oldham Chronicle* for 1869, will make manifest.

About the latter end of July 1869, a body buried in Harpurhey Cemetery was declared to be that of old Miss Beswick, whose mummified corpse had long been exhibited as a curiosity in the Manchester Museum. For upwards of a century, so it was alleged, the rightful heirs of Birchen Bower, Rose Hill and Cheetwood Estates had been kept out of their property by a crafty stratagem, and the burial of the body of the so long deceased lady was to be the means of restoring to the family of the former owners their long-withheld domains.

The ancient homestead of Birchen Bower, Hollinwood, was a quaint four-gabled edifice, built in the form of a cross, and remarkable for the beauty of its summer surroundings. All of it, save the southern wing, was demolished some years ago; but the spirit, or whatever

else it may be termed, belonging to the residence, did not desert the spot when so much of its beauty and interest was destroyed. A large barn, that is still, or was recently, standing, and which bears the initials of the Beswick family engraved on it, with the date of 1728, but which appears to have been built much earlier, is the centre of quite a number of legends and superstitious stories.

Miss, or Madame Beswick, as she is often called, is the nucleus about which all these curious myths gather. Who she really was would seem to be somewhat uncertain, but tradition states that she lived at Bower House, and farmed the estate, until old age compelled her to retire to a little stone cottage which stood on the brink of the mill-stream that ripples through the sloping front garden. The old lady was said to be very wealthy, and when the rebels under Prince Charlie visited the neighbourhood in 1745, she was terribly afraid they would requisition her belongings, so secreted "vast sums of money and articles of value" about the premises. The Scottish intruders did not carry the war into Miss Beswick's territory, but the relatives of the old lady could never afterwards induce her to reveal where the hidden treasures were. A few days before her death, it is said, she promised if they would carry her up to Bower House she would disclose the secret and point out where the gold was secreted, but they neglected the opportunity. She became suddenly worse, and died, leaving the whole affair enveloped in mystery.

Here was, indeed, a capital foundation for a ghost

story! But better material lurks behind. A hundred years passed away, and the body of Miss Beswick was not buried! Why this interment was so long deferred has been variously stated, but the following account would appear to embody the most popular, if not, indeed, the most historical elements of the case. A brother of Miss Beswick was supposed to have been considered dead, but just before the coffin-lid was screwed down signs of animation were noticed; restoratives were applied, and, after having been in a trance for several days, he revived, and lived for many years after. This circumstance is supposed to have made so intense an impression upon the mind of Miss Beswick, that she left her estates to Dr. White, her medical attendant, to be held by him as long as her body was kept above ground. The doctor embalmed the body, and thus was enabled to keep it unburied, and so withhold the property from the long-expectant descendants of the Beswick family.

Whatever may be fact and what fiction about this tradition is not in our power to say, but the following extract from the *Manchester Guardian* of Saturday, August 15th, 1868, is certainly confirmatory of some portions of the popular account:—

"A CURIOUS INTERMENT.—On the 22nd of July were committed to the earth in the Harpurhey Cemetery the remains of Miss Beswick, removed from the Peter Street Museum. There is a tradition that this lady, who is supposed to have died about one hundred years ago, had acquired so strong a fear of being buried alive

that she left certain property to her (medical?) attendant, so long (so the story runs) as she should be kept above ground. The doctor seems to have embalmed the body with tar, and then swathed it with a strong bandage, leaving the face exposed, and to have kept 'her' out of the grave as long as he could. For many years past the mummy has been lodged in the rooms of the Manchester Natural History Society, where it has long been an object of much popular interest. It seems that the Commissioners, who are charged with the re-arrangement of the Society's collections, have deemed this specimen undesirable, and have at last buried it."

One of the curious arrangements tradition asserts Miss Beswick bargained for was that every twenty-one years her body should be brought to Birchen Bower and remain there for one week, and old folks—who should know about it—declare the body was taken there at the stipulated times, and put in the granary of the old farmstead. Thus far, nothing beyond the eccentricity of humanity has been cited, but the eccentricities of a supernatural being have now to be referred to. In the morning, state these authorities, when the corpse was fetched, the horses and cows were always found let loose, and sometimes a cow would be found up in the hay-loft, although how it came there was, indeed, a mystery, as there was no passage large enough to admit a beast of such magnitude. The last prank of this description played by Miss Beswick, so far as our information goes, was a few years ago, when a cow belonging to the farmer then tenanting the place was found on the

hay-loft, and it was the firm belief of many thereabouts that supernatural agency had been employed to place it there. What made it particularly ominous was the fact that it was the fourteenth anniversary of seven years since Miss Beswick died, and it was a well-established fact that something supernatural happened or was seen at the expiration of every seven years at Birchen-Bower. How the cow was got up was a mystery to everyone, whilst that blocks had to be borrowed from Bower Mill to let it down through the hay-hole outside the barn was an equally well known fact.

After Miss Beswick's death, her old house was divided into several dwellings, and many strange stories are rife of the marvellous things therein seen and heard. One family had grown so familiar with the apparition of the old lady in the silken gown that they were in no way alarmed when she appeared. Sometimes when they were seated at supper a rustling of silk would be heard at the front entrance, and presently a lady arrayed in black silk would glide through the room, walk straight into the parlour, and then disappear at one particular flag-stone. It was a harmless spirit, annoying no one, and her appearance never drew forth any further remarks from the family than "Hush! the old lady comes again." In another part of the dwelling an inmate had a treadle-lathe for wood-turning, which he used after his day's work was over in doing petty jobs of joinery for the neighbours. Sometimes when he went into his little work-room an invisible visitor would be working away with the lathe in full motion.

It is now about eighty-five years since the almost forgotten "Barley Times" made sad oppression amongst the poor people of this country. Protection had nearly ruined the nation; flour was at a fearful price, and good bread scarcely obtainable. As a body the hand-loom weavers were starving for want of food; but one of them, "Joe at Tamer's," made such large purchases and seemed so flush of money that everybody was puzzled. It was well known that Joe had a large family of small children, who were supposed to depend for their daily bread upon his labours with the shuttle, and yet it was clear that they were stinted neither in food nor clothing. Joe lived in one wing of Birchen Bower house, and it was whispered that he had found the gold which had been hidden by "Madame" Beswick. Years passed away before the source of Joe's wealth was discovered; but eventually he confessed that he had pulled up the floor of the haunted parlour, intending to put up a loom for one of his children to learn to weave, and in digging the treadle-hole he had found a tin vessel filled with gold wedges, each valued at three pounds ten shillings. He never mentioned the circumstance to anyone at the time, but took his find to Oliphant's, in St. Anne's Square, Manchester, and got it changed into current coin. People were still living a few years ago who knew "Joe at Tamer's," and the tin vessel in which he found the gold is said to be still preserved by his descendants.

It was thought that the discovery of her hidden treasure would break the spell, and that Madame Beswick's

troubled spirit would now rest; but this is not the case. Some few years ago she was seen near the old well by the brook-side, when a presumed heir of the estates was pressing his claim. A rustic was going to fetch a pail of water; but when he got to the well he beheld a tall lady standing by it, wearing a black silk gown and a white cap with a frilled border of those stiff, old-fashioned puffs which were formerly worn. She stood there in the dusk, in a defiant or threatening attitude, streams of blue light seeming to dart from her eyes and flash on the horror-stricken man. This appearance of the lady's apparition was considered as a token that she would get no rest until the estates had reverted to the real heir. In light of the hitherto want of success of the Beswicks to regain the property, notwithstanding their frequent efforts, the old lady's spirit appears doomed for a very lengthy and uncertain space of time to walk the earth.

Madame Beswick, indeed, still haunts the old neighbourhood; on clear, moonlight nights she walks in a headless state between the old barn and the horse-pool, and at other times assumes the forms of different animals, but is always lost sight of near the horsepool: this causes some folk to fancy that she concealed something there during the Scottish invasion, which she is now desirous of pointing out to anyone courageous enough to speak to her.

On dark and dreary winter nights the barn, it is said, appears to be on fire; a red glare of glowing heat being observable through the loop-holes and crevices of the

building, and strange, unearthly noises proceed from it, as if Satan and all his imps were holding jubilee there. Sometimes, indeed, the sight is so threatening that the neighbours will raise an alarm and knock up the farmer and tell him the barn is in flames. When the premises are searched, however, nothing is found wrong, everything is in order, and the neighbours go terror-stricken home, fully convinced that they have witnessed another of Madame Beswick's supernatural pranks.

BLACKADON.

THE belief in headless spectres of not only human, but equine and canine beings is very widely spread throughout England, as readers of Charles Hardwick's *Traditions*, and other kindred works, are well aware. In the western counties the myth is frequently localised, as at Plymouth, where Sir Francis Drake has been seen driving a hearse drawn by headless horses, and followed by a pack of headless hounds. In Cornwall such apparitions are quite common, one of the most noted being that told of by the Rev. Thistleton Dyer in *One and All.*

The Rev. Richard Dodge, early in the last century, vicar of Talland, near Looe, in Cornwall, like several other Cornish clergymen, was very eccentric. His singularities impressed the surrounding peasantry with a great awe of him, and to meet him on the highway

after dark inspired, it is averred, the utmost consternation and terror. At that lonesome time he was believed to drive along the evil spirits, some of whom were visible in various sorts of shapes, and pursue them with his whip in a most audacious manner. Not unfrequently, too, he would be seen in the churchyard at midnight, to the great horror of passers-by. As an exorcist Mr. Dodge had a great reputation; he was supposed to be deeply versed in the black art, and able, not only to raise ghosts, but to "lay" them in the Red Sea, or other convenient resting-place, by a nod of his head. A truly useful clergyman for the time and locality, although, indeed, his fame was not confined to his own parish nor limited to the age in which he lived.

One day a messenger arrived at his house with a note from Mr. Mills, Rector of Lanreath, to this effect: "On divers occasions has the labourer, returning from his work across the moor, been frightened nigh into lunacy by sounds and sights of a very dreadful character. The appearance is said to be that of a man, habited in black, driving a carriage drawn by *headless horses*. My present business is to ask your assistance in this matter, either to reassure the minds of the country people if it only be a simple terror, or, if there be any truth in it, to set the troubled spirit of the man at rest."

This was quite sufficient to put a man of Mr. Dodge's temperament upon his mettle. The next night, accompanied by Mr. Mills, he set out to visit the haunted

locality; but, although the night was dark and murky, they could catch no glimpse of the ghostly driver, and only hear the occasional howling of dogs belonging to distant farm-houses, or else the melancholy wailing of the wind, as it soughed across the moor. After some long time the clergymen became wearied of waiting, and decided that it was useless to watch any longer then, but they agreed to meet again some other night in hopes of meeting the spectre.

They separated, Mr. Dodge for the vicarage at Talland, and Mr. Mills for his rectory at Lanreath. Mr. Dodge had not proceeded far before his steed became excessively restive, and, although he applied whip and spur, the beast grew most uneasy, pricked up its ears, snorted, and swerved from side to side of the road, as if something stood in the path before it. This continued for some time, until Mr. Dodge, thinking it dangerous to attempt to pursue his journey, threw the reins on the neck of the horse, when it immediately started back towards the moor, and, with immense rapidity, carried him to the spot where he had parted from his companion. On nearing this place, the horse seemed seized with incontrollable fury; and the vicar was horrified to behold Mr. Mills prostrate on the ground, and by his side, the much-dreaded spectre of the black coach and the headless horses!

Jumping down to the assistance of his insensible friend, Mr. Dodge raised his lips in prayer, when, instantly, the spectre screamed, "Dodge is come! I must be gone!" and leaped into its chariot, whipping furi-

ously the headless horses, and vanishing into the darkness of the night. The rector's horse, which had taken flight on beholding its own headless kith and kin, galloped off homewards at a terrible rate. The sound of its hoofs, as it dashed madly through the quiet little village, aroused the cottagers, who, deeming their clergyman had been thrown and, perhaps, killed, turned out in a body to seek for him. On arriving at Blackadon, they discovered their rector, supported by Mr. Dodge, but in an insensible condition. They escorted him home, and, in a few days, much to the satisfaction of everybody, he recovered completely from the ill effects of his severe fright and fall.. Curious to relate, from that time, nothing has been seen or heard of this ghost and its headless horses driving over that moor.

BLACK HEDDON.

BLACK HEDDON, a quiet village near Stamfordham, in Northumberland, acquired an unenviable notoriety some fifty years or so ago, on account of a troublesome spectre by which it was haunted. The supernatural being, whose pranks so disturbed this picturesque but secluded place, was known as "Silky," on account of its silken and rustling attire. It is a strange but by no means unparalleled circumstance, that spirits bearing the same name, and endowed with similar characteristics,

have rendered untenantable the once famed manor-house of Chirton, as well as many other ancient English dwellings. Although Richardson, in his *Table-Book of Traditions*, asserts that "Silky" has now disappeared from Black Heddon, and has ceased her manifold methods of annoying its inhabitants, this scarcely seems borne out by facts, if our information may be relied on. The tradition of her vagaries was too deeply impressed upon the locality to be quite eradicated in one generation or so.

"Silky," although occasionally manifesting herself, or itself, in various shapes and ways, has a marked predilection for making herself visible in the semblance of a female dressed in silken attire.

Many a time, when one of the more timorous of the community had a night journey to perform, has he, unawares and invisibly, been dogged and watched by this spectral tormentor, who, at the dreariest part of the road, the most suitable for thrilling surprises, would suddenly break forth in dazzling splendour. If the person happened to be on horseback, a sort of exercise for which "Silky" evinced a strong partiality, she would unexpectedly seat herself behind him, "rattling in her silks." Then, after the enjoyment of a comfortable ride, with instantaneous abruptness, she would dissolve "into thin air," leaving the bewildered horseman in blank amazement.

At Belsay, two or three miles from Black Heddon, the spectre had a favourite resort. It was a romantic crag, finely studded with trees, under the gloomy shadow

of which she loved to wander all the live-long night. Here often has the belated peasant beheld her dimly through the sombre twilight, as if engaged in splitting great stones, or hewing, with many a stroke, some stately monarch of the grove. Whilst he thus stood and gazed, he would suddenly hear the howling of a resistless tempest rushing through the woodland, while to the eye not a leaf was seen to quiver, nor a spray to bend.

The bottom of this crag is washed by a picturesque lake or fish-pond, at whose outlet is a waterfall, over which a venerable tree, sweeping its shadowy arms, adds to the impressiveness of the scene. Amid the complicated and contorted limbs of this tree, "Silky" possessed a rude chair, where she was wont, in her moodier moments, to sit, rocked by the winds, enjoying the rustling of the storm through the woods, or the rush of the cascade during the pauses of the gale. This tree, so consecrated by the terrors of the vicinity, was carefully preserved through the care of the late proprietor, Sir Charles M. L. Monk, Bart., of Belsay Castle, and, though no longer tenanted by its ghostly visitant, it yet spreads majestically its time-hallowed canopy over the mysterious spot, and still, in memory of its spectral occupant, bears the name of "Silky's Seat."

"Silky" exercised a marvellous influence over the brute creation. Horses—which would appear to possess a discernment of spirits superior to man, at least are more sharp-sighted in the dark—were in an extraordinary degree sensitive to her presence and control. Having

once perceived the effects of her power, she seems to have had a perverse pleasure in meddling with and arresting them in the midst of their labours. When this misfortune occurred there was no ordinary remedy brute force could devise to make the restive beast resume the proper and intended direction. Expostulation, soothing, whipping, and kicking were all exerted in vain. The ultimate resource, unless it might be her whim to revoke the spell in the interim, was Witch-wood or Rowan tree, an antidote of unfailing efficacy in this as in all similar cases.

One night, an unfortunate farm-servant was the selected victim of her mischievous frolics. He had to go to a colliery at some distance for coals, and it was late in the evening before he could return. "Silky" waylaid him at a bridge, henceforth called "Silky's Brig," lying a little to the south of Black Heddon, on the road between that place and Stamfordham. Just as he had arrived at the "height of that bad eminence" the keystone, horses and cart became fixed and immovable; and in that melancholy plight might man and beast have continued, quaking, sweating, and paralysed, till morning light, had not a neighbouring servant come up opportunely to the rescue, carrying some of the potent Witch-wood with him. On the arrival of this seasonable aid the charm was effectually broken, and in a short time both man and coals reached home in safety.

"Silky" was wayward and capricious, but at length her erratic course came to an end. She abruptly dis-

appeared. It had been long surmised, by those who paid attention to the matter, that she was the troubled phantom of some person who had died miserably, in consequence of being overtaken by mortal agony before she was able to disclose the whereabouts of a great treasure she was in possession of, and on that account could not lie still in her grave. About the period referred to, a domestic female servant, being alone in one of the rooms of a house at Black Heddon, was frightfully alarmed by the ceiling above suddenly giving way, and the dropping from it, with a prodigious clash, of something black, shapeless, and uncouth. The servant did not stop to scrutinize an object so hideous and startling, but fled to her mistress, screaming at the pitch of her voice, "The deevil's in the house! The deevil's in the house! He's come through the ceiling!" With this terrible announcement, the whole family were speedily convoked, and great was their consternation at the idea of the foe of mankind being amongst them in a visible form. In this appalling extremity, a considerable time elapsed before anyone could brace up courage to face "the enemy," or be prevailed on to go and inspect the cause of the alarm. At last the mistress, who happened to be the most stout-hearted, ventured into the room, when, instead of the personage on whose account such awful apprehensions were entertained, a great dog's skin lay on the floor, black and hideous enough forsooth, but filled with *gold*. The house where this occurred was, at the time, occupied by the Hepples, respectable yeomen of the place;

their descendants were still the proprietors of it in 1844, and, it is said, had acquired a very considerable sum from "Silky's" long hidden treasure.

After this, "Silky" was neither seen nor heard, is the opinion of the narrator of the above circumstances. "Her destiny was accomplished, her spirit laid, and she now," according to this informant, "sleeps as peacefully and unperturbed as the degenerate and unenterprising ghosts of more recent times."

BLENKINSOPP CASTLE.

Grim, gaunt, and hoary, the fragmentary ruins of the ancient fortress of Blenkinsopp, stand as a shadowy semblance of the majestic strength which the castle wore in former ages. Upwards of five centuries have elapsed since this border stronghold was erected upon a commanding knoll on the western frontier of Northumberland, and naturally so antique a building has gathered about it a garment of tradition. The most noteworthy legend attached to Blenkinsopp, and one most devoutly believed in by the neighbouring peasantry, is that of "The White Lady," whose apparition has haunted the castle for centuries and even now appears from time to time.

The legend which accounts for this long-existent phantom, this rival to "The White Lady of Skipsea," is related with more or less minuteness by various

historians; but in the following version, derived from Richardson's *Table Book of Traditions*, the more salient points of the story will be found.

Bryan de Blenkinsopp, or "Blenship" as the name is provincially contracted into, was gallant and brave; in a private feud, a border raid, or on the battle-field, he was ever first. The mighty and brave ranked him as one of their number; the harps of the minstrels sang his praises in numerous lays, whilst divers bright eyes looked fondly and favourably on the form of the dark and handsome warrior. But with all his good qualities, and they were many, Bryan de Blenkinsopp had a failing which ultimately wrecked his fortune. This failing was an inordinate love of wealth; this vice he cherished in secret, and as earnestly though vainly sought to discard; it grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength, and gnawed into his very soul.

At the marriage of a brother warrior with a lady of high rank and fortune, amongst other health-drinkings was given that of Bryan de Blenkinsopp and his "ladye love." "Never," said Bryan, "never shall that be until I meet with a lady possessed of a chest of gold heavier than ten of my strongest men can carry into my castle." This extraordinary announcement was received by the company in silence, but the many looks of surprise which were exchanged did not escape his jealous observation. Ashamed of having betrayed his secret thoughts, he quitted the place, and his country.

After an absence of many years Sir Bryan returned,

bringing with him not only a wife, but also a box of gold that took twelve of his strongest men to carry into the Castle. There was great feasting and rejoicing for many days for the lord's return, amongst friends and followers, and the fame of his wealth was spread far and wide. After a length of time it began to be whispered that the life of the rich baron was anything but a happy one, for he and his lady quarrelled continually; she, with the assistance of the followers who accompanied her, having secreted the chest of gold in some part of the castle, and refused to give it up to her lawful husband and master. Whom she was or whence she came was unknown; her followers spoke a foreign tongue, so nothing could be gleaned from them. Some folks even hinted that she was not a human being, but an imp of darkness sent with her wealth to ensnare Sir Bryan's soul.

One day the young lord suddenly left the Castle, and went no one knew whither. His lady was inconsolable for her loss, and filled the whole castle with her lamentation. The vassals were despatched to all parts in order to discover whither he had fled, but without success. After searching in vain, and waiting for more than a year, she and her attendants started forth in search of the missing man.

The fate of Bryan de Blenkinsopp and his wife is enveloped in mystery, and there is no hand to draw aside the impenetrable veil and show us if ever they met again, through what climes they wandered, or on what field he fell! Certain it is that neither ever returned to

Blenkinsopp. Tradition asserts that the lady, filled with remorse for her undutiful conduct towards her lord, cannot rest in her grave, but must needs wander back to the old castle and mourn over the chest of wealth—the cursed cause of all their woe—so uselessly buried beneath the crumbling ruins. Here she must continue to wander until someone possessed of sufficient courage to follow her to the vault shall discover and remove the hidden treasure, and so give her perturbed spirit rest.

The knowledge of this tradition naturally inclined the surrounding peasantry to regard the old castle with superstitious awe, and certain comparatively recent events have contributed, in no slight degree, to heighten the impression. The following curious circumstance was communicated to Richardson by Mr. W. Pattison, of Bishopwearmouth.

More than thirty years ago, said this correspondent in an account written nearly forty years ago, there lived, in two of the more habitable apartments of the weather-beaten walls of the massive structure raised by Thomas de Blenkinsopp, a labourer of the estate, and his family. Both rooms appear to have been used as sleeping chambers, because, as we are informed, one night, after retiring to rest, the parents were alarmed by loud, reiterated screams, issuing from the adjoining apartment. Rushing in, they found one of their children, a boy, sitting up in bed, trembling, bathed in perspiration, and evidently in extreme terror.

"The White Lady! the White Lady!" screamed

the lad, holding his hands before his eyes as if to shut out some frightful object.

"What lady?" cried the astonished parents, looking around the room, which, to all appearance, was entirely untenanted; "there is no lady here."

"She is gone," replied the boy, "and she looked so angry at me because I would not go with her. She was a fine lady—and she sat down on my bedside, and wrung her hands and cried sore; then she kissed me and asked me to go with her, and she would make me a rich man, as she had buried a large box of gold, many hundred years since, down in the yault, and she would give it me, as she could not rest as long as it was there. When I told her I durst not go, she said she would carry me, and was lifting me up when I cried out and frightened her away."

A tale so singular, and yet, to all appearance, narrated with fidelity, filled the old people with fear and astonishment. It was currently reported that the Castle was haunted by a white lady, although since their entrance into the dreary abode they had hitherto been undisturbed. Persuading themselves that the child had been dreaming, they succeeded in quieting and getting him to sleep. The three following nights they were disturbed in the same manner—the child repeating the same story, with little variation, when, after a little consideration, they removed him, and were no longer troubled with the spectre; yet, such was the terror with which it inspired him, that he dared not enter into any part of the old castle alone, even in daylight.

When the boy grew to manhood, although a sensible person, adds Mr. Pattison, he invariably persisted in the truth of his statement, and said that at forty years of age he could recall the scene so vividly as to make him shudder, as if still he felt her cold lips press his cheeks, and the death-like embrace of her wan arms. He was alive in 1805, and had become a settler in Canada.

The belief that treasure lies buried in Blenkinsopp Castle was not a little strengthened, some years ago, by the arrival of a strange lady at the neighbouring village. She, it would appear, had dreamt that a large chest of gold lay buried in the castle vaults, and, although she had never seen it before, she instantly recognised the castle as the same she had seen in her dream. She stayed several weeks, awaiting the return of the owner of the property to ask leave to search. She had, meanwhile, made the hostess of the inn her confidant, with strict injunctions not to divulge it to anyone. The landlady, unable to preserve so interesting a secret, appears to have told it to every person in the village, but always accompanied with a caution similar to that she had received herself: "Dinna ye be speaking on 't." Whether from the circumstances having acquired such publicity, or from reasons unknown to our informant, cannot be said, but, at any rate, the unknown lady suddenly departed, without, of course, having accomplished the purpose of her pilgrimage to Blenkinsopp.

Up till 1820 some poor families continued to occupy a few of the more habitable rooms of the old castle, but even these are now ruinous and deserted. A few years

ago, the occupier of the neighbouring farm gave orders for the vaults underneath the keep to be cleared out, for the purpose of wintering cattle therein. On removing the rubbish, a small doorway, level with the bottom of the keep, was discovered. On clearing out the entrance, the workmen were surprised by the appearance of a large swarm of meat-flies, and the place itself smelt damp and noisome. The news soon spread abroad that the entrance to the "Lady's Vault" had been discovered, and people flocked in great numbers to see it. Of the whole number assembled, however, but one man was found willing to enter. He described the passage as narrow, and not sufficiently high to admit of a man walking upright. He walked in a straightforward direction for a few yards, then descended a flight of steps, after which he again proceeded in a straightforward course until he came to a doorway; the door itself had fallen to pieces, the bolt was rusting in its fastening, and the hinges clung to the post with shaky hold. At this juncture the passage took a sudden turn, and a lengthened flight of precipitous steps presented themselves. Opening his lantern, and turning the light, he peered down the stairs into the thick darkness, but, encountering thick noxious vapours, his candle was extinguished, and he was obliged to grope his way back to his companions. He made another attempt, but never descended the second flight of stairs; and so little curiosity had their employer about the matter, that he ordered it to be closed up, and the contents of the vault remain undiscovered to this day. "When I saw the place," records

Mr. Pattison, "some time after this adventure, the hole had been partially opened by some boys, who were amusing themselves with tossing stones therein, and listening to the hollow echoes as they rolled in the depths of the mysterious cavern."

BOGNOR.

The number for August 10th, 1867, of *All the Year Round*, contained the following very strange circumstantial narrative of a supernatural character. It purports to have been "taken down in shorthand from the lips of the narrator," and the transcriber is believed to have been Charles Dickens himself. The story is related as "a pendant to the paper which recently appeared in this journal headed 'Is it Possible?'" (particulars of which will be found under the heading of "Hampton Court"); to which story a note was added by the editor, believed to have been, at that time, as also in this instance, Charles Dickens.

This "simple narrative," as it is editorially described, is said to have been derived from a man getting on in years, "who, distrustful of all other people's experience verging on what we impertinently term the supernatural, scarcely even ventures to believe his own." "As a statement at first hand," says the supposed transcriber, whose alleged transcription is evidently the work of an experienced *littérateur*, "as a statement at first hand of

an appearance testified to by the narrator and corroborated by his wife, both living, it has seemed to me, while simply transcribing the notes, to possess an interest often wanting in more artistic stories of artificial manufacture." After these introductory words the "transcriber" proceeds to give his story in the following terms:—

"My wife's sister, Mrs. M——, was left a widow at the age of thirty-five, with two children, girls, of whom she was passionately fond. She carried on the draper's business at Bognor, established by her husband. Being still a very handsome woman, there were several suitors for her hand. The only favoured one amongst them was a Mr. Barton. My wife never liked this Mr. Barton, and made no secret of her feelings to her sister, whom she frequently told that Mr. Barton only wanted to be master of the little haberdashery shop in Bognor. He was a man in poor circumstances, and had no other motive in his proposal of marriage, so my wife thought, than to better himself.

"On the 23rd of August, 1831, Mrs. M—— arranged to go with Barton to a pic-nic party at Goodwood Park, the seat of the Duke of Richmond, who had kindly thrown open his grounds to the public for the day. My wife, a little annoyed at her going out with this man, told her she had much better remain at home to look after her children and attend to the business. Mrs. M——, however, bent on going, made arrangements about leaving the shop, and got my wife to promise to see to her little girls while she was away.

"The party set out in a four-wheeled phaeton, with a pair of ponies driven by Mrs. M——, and a gig for which I lent my horse.

"Now we did not expect them to come back till nine or ten o'clock, at any rate. I mention this particularly to show that there could be no expectation of their earlier return in the mind of my wife, to account for what follows.

"At six o'clock that bright summer's evening my wife went out into the garden to call the children. Not finding them, she went all round the place in her search till she came to the empty stable; thinking they might have run in there to play, she pushed open the door; there, standing in the darkest corner, she saw Mrs. M——. My wife was surprised to see her, certainly; for she did not expect her return so soon; but, oddly enough, it did not strike her as being singular to see her *there.* Vexed as she had felt with her all day for going, and rather glad, in her woman's way, to have something entirely different from the genuine *casus belli* to hang a retort upon, my wife said: 'Well, Harriet, I should have thought another dress would have done quite as well for your picnic as that best black silk you have on.' My wife was the elder of the twain, and had always assumed a little of the air of counsellor to her sister. Black silks were thought a great deal more of at that time than they are just now, and silk of any kind was held particularly inconsistent wear for Wesleyan Methodists, to which denomination we belonged.

"Receiving no answer, my wife said: 'Oh, well,

Harriet, if you can't take a word of reproof without being sulky, I 'll leave you to yourself;' and then she came into the house to tell me the party had returned, and that she had seen her sister in the stable, not in the best of tempers. At the moment it did not seem extraordinary to me that my wife should have met her sister in the stable.

"I waited in-doors some time, expecting them to return my horse. Mrs. M—— was my neighbour, and, being always on most friendly terms, I wondered that none of the party had come in to tell us about the day's pleasure. I thought I would just run in and see how they had got on. To my great surprise the servant told me they had not returned. I began, then, to feel anxiety about the result. My wife, however, having seen Harriet in the stable, refused to believe the servant's assertion; and said there was no doubt of their return, but that they had probably left word to say they were not come back, in order to offer a plausible excuse for taking a further drive, and detaining my horse for another hour or so.

"At eleven o'clock Mr. Pinnock, my brother-in-law, who had been one of the party, came in, apparently much agitated. As soon as she saw him, and before he had time to speak, my wife seemed to know what he had to say.

"'What is the matter?' she said; 'something has happened to Harriet, I know!'

"'Yes,' replied Mr. Pinnock; 'If you wish to see her alive you must come with me directly to Goodwood.'

"From what he said it appeared that one of the ponies had never been properly broken in; that the man from whom the turn-out was hired for the day had cautioned Mrs. M—— respecting it before they started; and that he had lent it reluctantly, being the only pony to match in the stable at the time, and would not have lent it at all had he not known Mrs. M—— to be a remarkably good whip.

"On reaching Goodwood, it seems, the gentlemen of the party had got out, leaving the ladies to take a drive round the park in the phaeton. One or both of the ponies must then have taken fright at something in the road, for Mrs. M—— had scarcely taken the reins when the ponies shied. Had there been plenty of room she would readily have mastered the difficulty; but it was in a narrow road, where a gate obstructed the way. Some men rushed to open the gate—too late. The three other ladies jumped out at the beginning of the accident; but Mrs. M—— still held on to the reins, seeking to control her ponies, until, finding it was impossible for the men to get the gate open in time, she, too, sprang forward; at the same instant the ponies came smash on to the gate. She had made her spring too late, and fell heavily to the ground on her head. The heavy, old-fashioned comb of the period, with which her hair was looped up, was driven into her skull by the force of the fall. The Duke of Richmond, a witness to the accident, ran to her assistance, lifted her up, and rested her head upon his knees. The only words Mrs. M—— had spoken were uttered

at the time: "Good God, my children!" By direction of the Duke she was immediately conveyed to a neighbouring inn, where every assistance, medical and otherwise, that forethought or kindness could suggest was afforded her.

"At six o'clock in the evening, the time at which my wife had gone into the stable and seen what we now knew had been her spirit, Mrs. M——, in her sole interval of returning consciousness, had made a violent but unsuccessful attempt to speak. From her glance having wandered round the room, in solemn, awful wistfulness, it had been conjectured she wished to see some relative or friend not then present. I went to Goodwood in the gig with Mr. Pinnock, and arrived in time to see my sister-in-law die at two o'clock in the morning. Her only conscious moments had been those in which she laboured unsuccessfully to speak, which had occurred at six o'clock. She wore a black silk dress.

"When we came to dispose of her business, and to wind up her affairs, there was scarcely anything left for the two orphan girls. Mrs. M——'s father, however, being well to do, took them to bring up. At his death, which happened soon afterwards, his property went to his eldest son, who speedily dissipated the inheritance. During a space of two years the children were taken as visitors by various relations in turn, and lived an unhappy life with no settled home.

"For some time I had been debating with myself, how to help these children, having many boys and girls

of my own to provide for. I had almost settled to take them myself, bad as trade was with me at the time, and bring them up with my own family, when one day business called me to Brighton. The business was so urgent that it necessitated my travelling at night.

"I set out from Bognor in a close-headed gig on a beautiful moonlight winter's night, when the crisp frozen snow lay deep over the earth, and its fine glistening dust was whirled about in little eddies on the bleak night-wind—driven now and then in stinging powder against my tingling cheek, warm and glowing in the sharp air. I had taken my great dog 'Bose' (short for 'Boatswain') for company. He lay, blinking wakefully, sprawled out on the spare seat of the gig beneath a mass of warm rugs.

"Between Littlehampton and Worthing, is a lonely piece of road, long and dreary, through bleak and bare open country, where the snow lay knee-deep, sparkling in the moonlight. It was so cheerless that I turned round to speak to my dog, more for the sake of hearing the sound of a voice than anything else. 'Good Bose,' I said, patting him, 'there 's a good dog!' Then suddenly I noticed he shivered, and shrank underneath the wraps. Then the horse required my attention, for he gave a start, and was going wrong, and had nearly taken me into the ditch.

"Then I looked up. Walking at my horse's head, dressed in a sweeping robe, so white that it shone dazzling against the white snow, I saw a lady, her back turned to me, her head bare; her hair dishevelled and

strayed, showing sharp and black against her white dress.

"I was at first so much surprised at seeing a lady, so dressed, exposed to the open night, and such a night as this, that I scarcely knew what to do. Recovering myself, I called out to know if I could render assistance —if she wished to ride? No answer. I drove faster, the horse blinking, and shying, and trembling the while, his ears laid back in abject terror. Still the figure maintained its position close to my horse's head. Then I thought that what I saw was no woman, but perchance a man disguised for the purpose of robbing me, seeking an opportunity to seize the bridle and stop the horse. Filled with this idea, I said, 'Good Bose! hi! look at it, boy!' but the dog only shivered as if in fright. Then we came to a place where four cross roads met.

"Determined to know the worst, I pulled up the horse. I fetched Bose, unwilling, out by the ears. He was a good dog at anything from a rat to a man, but he slunk away that night into the hedge, and lay there, his head between his paws, whining and howling. I walked straight up to the figure, still standing by the horse's head. As I walked, the figure turned, and I saw *Harriet's face* as plainly as I see you now—white and calm—placid, as idealized and beautified by death. I must own that, though not a nervous man, in that instant I felt sick and faint. Harriet looked me full in the face with a long, eager, silent look. I knew then it was her spirit, and felt a strange calm come over me, for I knew it was nothing to harm me. When I

could speak, I asked what troubled her. She looked at me still, never changing that cold fixed stare. Then I felt in my mind it was her children, and I said:

"'Harriet! is it for your children you are troubled?'

"No answer.

"'Harriet,' I continued, 'if for these you are troubled, be assured they shall never want while I have power to help them. Rest in peace!'

"Still no answer.

"I put up my hand to wipe from my forehead the cold perspiration which had gathered there. When I took my hand away from shading my eyes, the figure was gone. I was alone on the bleak snow-covered ground. The breeze, that had been hushed before, breathed coolly and gratefully on my face, and the cold stars glimmered and sparkled sharply in the far blue heavens. My dog crept up to me and furtively licked my hand, as who should say, 'Good master, don't be angry, I have served you in all but this.'

"I took the children and brought them up till they could help themselves."

BOLLING HALL.

BOLLING, or Bowling Hall, near Bradford, the residence of J. M. Tankard, Esq., is a fine old manor-house in a very good state of preservation; the present owner

having done everything to render it convenient and comfortable without sacrificing its ancient appearance. This Hall was formerly the abode of the Bollings; but in 1502 Rosamund Bolling, sole heiress of the property, carried it by marriage into the Tempest family, from whom it passed through the hands of several successive owners until finally it became the property of the present proprietor.

Some portions of this picturesque old place are very ancient; the embattled western tower, says Mr. William Scruton, to whom we are chiefly indebted for the information contained in this chapter, appearing, from its weather-beaten masonry and the thickness of its walls, to date not later than the reign of Edward the Third. Another tower of great antiquity flanks the other end of the fabric. That portion of the front which lies between the towers seems, from the ornate style of its architecture, to have been the work of earlier Tempests, and contains two large embayed windows, of which the western bay with heavy mullions is the window of "the ghost chamber." This haunted room is above the breakfast room, and formerly communicated by a passage, now bricked up, with the kitchens and servants' apartments. Its plaster ceiling is beautifully moulded, being covered with an elaborate tracery of conventionally treated branches bearing fruit and flowers, that, with the birds resting on them, issue out of the mouths of horses, boars, and other animals. The walls, which are covered with oak panels, painted a light colour, are surrounded by a curious cornice and frieze, consisting of human

heads and grotesque animals in relief. The lofty carved oak mantel-piece is very remarkable; it is supported by two fluted columns, which support a canopy ornamented with oak and vine leaves and sprays, below which are portraits of Sir Richard Tempest and Rosamund his wife, painted on wood, and in a remarkably good state of preservation, considering the three centuries and a half which have elapsed since they were painted.

The last Tempest who held sway at Bolling Hall was Richard, styled by Markham "a weak, imprudent man, a Royalist and a gamester." When the Puritan party finally triumphed, this Tempest compounded for his estates by a heavy fine, which, coupled with his gambling proclivities, led to his ruin. In the autumn of 1658 he died in the King's Bench, a prisoner for debt. According to the current legend he staked and lost Bolling Hall and all his estates at cards, during the deal exclaiming:

> "Now ace, deuce, and tray,
> Or farewell, Bolling Hall, for ever and aye!"

No wonder if this Royalist reprobate's uneasy spirit haunts its squandered-away Hall; but what his ancient dwelling is chiefly noted for is for an apparition which visited it, or, rather, rendered itself visible at the time of his ownership of the place.

During the Civil War Bradford was closely invested by the Royalists under the Earl of Newcastle. This nobleman, who had made Bolling Hall his head-quarters, being enraged at the slaughter of the Earl of Newport, prepared instructions for a general massacre of the

inhabitants, men, women, and children; no quarter to be given to any. However, before the town capitulated, different orders were issued, and instructions given that none should be put to death. The reason of this great change of orders is generally attributed to supernatural intervention. Popular tradition declares that a female arrayed in white appeared in the Earl's bed-chamber at Bolling Hall, and besought mercy for the townsfolk. According to the well-known account of Mr. Joseph Lister, who was in Bradford during the siege, "it was generally reported that something came on the Lord's Day night, and pulled the clothes off his bed several times, and cried out with a lamentable voice 'Pity poor Bradford!' that then he sent out his orders that neither man, woman, nor child should be killed in the town; and that then the apparition which had so disturbed him left him and went away."

There does not appear to be any record of another appearance of this apparition, but the story of its visit to the Earl is an old and widely-diffused one; wherefore it would not do to omit from this collection the account of "The Bolling Hall Ghost."

BRUNDON HALL.

Mr. Barham, in his life of his father, the author of the world-famed *Ingoldsby Legends*, cites the following curious circumstances from the reverend author's diary.

Barham states that the story is current in the Carter family, of which his first wife was a member, and that it was told to him by Dr. Roberts:—

"One day," proceeds his narrative, "about the year 1785, two lads, one of whom was the uncle of the lady in question, were playing in the large hall of Brundon Hall, a mansion situated on the borders of Suffolk,* and at that time the property of the Carters, but which afterwards passed into the possession of the Hurrells. The attention of the boys, was suddenly caught by the opening of a door, usually kept locked, which led to the more ancient part of the landing; and they were more astonished still by the appearance of a strange lady dressed in blue satin, who slowly walked towards the great staircase, stamped three times on a large slab of blue stone which lay at the foot, and then, continuing her walk across the hall, disappeared through a door opposite the one by which she had entered. The boys, more puzzled than frightened, left off playing, and ran and told Mrs. Carter, the mistress of the house, and the mother of the narrator's (Mr. Roberts') uncle. She immediately fainted. Subsequently she told her son that the apparition had been frequently seen by other members of the family, and that there was a very dreadful story connected with it—which, however, she declined to communicate. Some years afterwards, the house having, I believe, changed hands in the interval, certain repairs were undertaken, in the course of which

* It is actually in Essex, and now forms part of Sudbury.—Ed.

the entrance to a large vault was discovered, concealed by the stone upon which the lady in blue satin had stamped. On examination two skeletons were found below; a gold bracelet was on the arm of one, and gold spurs were lying near the feet of the other. In addition, a goblet having some dark-coloured sediment at the bottom, supposed to be blood, was found in a recess in the wall, and a considerable quantity of infants' skulls and bones were heaped up in one corner. Lastly, a considerable sum in gold coin was brought to light."

The present representative of the Hurrells informs me that he is ignorant of the tradition attaching to Brundon Hall; but he adds that a pair of antique spurs and a sword were directed by his great grandfather in his will to be preserved as heir-looms in the family.

How far this coincidence may be thought to corroborate the story of the well-known Sudbury apparition, afterwards to be referred to, must be left to the reader to decide.

BURTON AGNES HALL.

Amongst the haunted houses of Great Britain those which are the permanent residence of certain skulls are the most curious. Various grand old halls, quaint farm-houses, and ancient dwellings, scattered about the kingdom, are troubled at times by all kinds of super-

natural disturbances, in consequence of some long and carefully preserved skull being removed from its resting-place, or otherwise interfered with. These pages furnish several singular instances of such legends connected with old ancestral dwellings, but none more mysterious, or devoutly believed in, than that connected with Burton Agnes Hall, the family seat of Sir Henry Somerville Boynton.

Burton Agnes is a picturesque village, between Bridlington and Driffield, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. It has some pretty cottages, a handsome church, containing several splendid tombs of the Boynton, Griffiths, and Somerville families (one of the last dating back to 1336), and the grand old Hall, the residence of the Boyntons. The village, which is chiefly, if not entirely, owned by the Boyntons, lies on the slope of the Wolds; a long chain of hills sweep round it from Flamborough Head on the north, whence extensive views over the lowlands of Holderness are obtainable.

The Hall, says Mr. F. Ross, from whose interesting article in the *Leeds Mercury* much of the following information is derived, is a large and picturesque building of red brick, with stone quoins—a mixture of the Tudor, Elizabethan, and Jacobean styles, with a long broken façade, ornamented with octagonal bays in the wings, and mullioned windows. In the interior are a grand hall, with a fine carved screen, behind which is the magnificent staircase; a noble gallery, containing a choice collection of paintings—an apartment which has not its equal for many miles. All the chief apartments

are profusely ornamented with carved woodwork, over the fire-place of the hall being a curious specimen representing "The Empire of Death." Inigo Jones is said to have designed the Hall, and Rubens to have decorated some portions of the interior. Inwardly and outwardly, this English home is as magnificent as it is curious yet comfortable. From the grand entrance gateway, an avenue of yew-trees stretches away to the porch of the Hall, producing a picturesque effect. Standing, as the edifice does, on an elevation, the panorama seen over the surrounding neighbourhood from its windows is both grand and impressive. Altogether, Burton Agnes Hall might be deemed, in every respect, a desirable dwelling. But there is a skeleton, or, rather, a portion of one, in this splendid mansion.

In the course of centuries the estates had passed, by descent, into possession of the De Somervilles, Griffiths, and Boynton families, until they became vested in the persons of three sisters, co-heiresses. A painting at the Hall, represents these three ladies in costumes of the Elizabethan period; and in one of the upper rooms is the portrait of a lady, apparently one of these three, the bodily representative of the spirit which haunts the ancient mansion, and who is familiarly and irreverently called "Awd Nance," by the domestics. The skull of this lady is preserved at the Hall, much against the will, it is averred, of the inhabitants thereof, but it is more than mortal dare do to remove it. When this relic of mortality is left quietly upon its resting-place, all goes well; but whenever any attempt is made to remove it,

most diabolical disturbances and unearthly noises are raised in the house, and last until it is restored. The story to account for these phenomena, as told by Mr. Ross, is as follows :—

"The three ladies, co-heiresses of the estate of Burton Agnes, were in possession of considerable wealth, and had very exalted ideas of the dignity of the family. For a while they resided in the ancient mansion, which had been the home of several generations of Griffiths and Somervilles; but it had become dilapidated, and was altogether out of fashion with the existing Elizabethan style of architecture, now merging into the Jacobean, and the three ladies began to think it altogether too mean for the residence of so important a family as theirs. They had many consultations on the subject, and, at length, determined to erect a hall in such a style as should eclipse the splendour of all the mansions in the neighbourhood, even that of the mighty Earls of Northumberland at Leckonfield, a few miles distant. The most active promoter of the scheme was Anne, the younger sister, who could talk, think, and dream of nothing but the magnificent home to be erected for themselves and their descendants. Money they had in abundance. They called in the best architects of the day to furnish designs; bricklayers, masons, and carpenters were soon at work building up the mansion, and then, for the decorative portions, the genius of Inigo Jones and the talents of Rubens were employed on whatever portion of the interior that was susceptible of artistic treatment. In process of time it

emerged from the hands of artists and workmen, like a palace erected by the Genii of the Arabian Nights, a palace encrusted throughout on walls, roof, and furniture with the most exquisite carvings and sculptures of the most skilled masters of the age, and radiant with the most glowing tints of the pencil of Peter Paul.

"Of the three sisters, Anne took the most lively interest in the new house. She witnessed the uprising walls, the development of the architectural features of the grand façade, and the outgrowth of the chiselled design of the interior under the cunning handicraft of the carvers and sculptors, with the most rapturous delight; and, when it was completed, could never sufficiently admire its symmetrical proportions, noble hall, stately gallery, and manifold artistic enrichments.

"Some little time after its completion and occupation by its lady owners, Anne, the enthusiast, paid an afternoon visit to the St. Quentins, at Harpham, about nightfall proposing to return home. She was wholly unattended, excepting by a dog, as the houses were only about a mile apart, singing merrily as she went along. As she approached St. John's Well, she perceived two ruffianly-looking mendicants stretched on the grass by its side. This was a very numerous and dangerous class, since the dissolution of the monasteries, at whose gates they had been supplied with food, and lived by traversing the country, and going from abbey to priory and priory to abbey, being generally too lazy to apply themselves to work; and although parochial Poor Laws had been passed in the two or three preceding reigns, it

had been left in a great measure to the people to contribute to the poor funds, more by way of a benevolence than as a compulsory rate, so that many parishes shirked the collection altogether, and thus the roads of the country and the streets of the towns swarmed with sturdy beggars, who would take no denial when they were able to demand alms by threats and violence. The lady approached them with some tremor, but did not feel much fear, as she was still within the precincts of Harpham, and not far from those who would afford her protection. The men rose as she came up to them, and asked alms, and she drew out her purse and gave them a few coins; but in doing so the glitter of her finger-ring attracted their notice, and, in a threatening tone, they demanded that it should be given up to them. As it was a heirloom that she had inherited from her mother, she valued it above all price, and declared she could not, on any account, give up her mother's ring. 'Mother or no mother,' replied one of the men in a gruff tone, 'we mean to have it, and if you do not bestow it freely, we must take it.' So saying, he seized her hand and attempted to draw off the ring. At this manifestation of violence she screamed aloud for help, when the other ruffian, exclaiming, 'Stop that noise!' struck her a blow on the head with his stick, and she fell senseless to the earth. Her screams had reached the village, and some rustics came hurrying up, upon which the villains made a hasty retreat, without being able to get the ring from her finger. She was found, as it was supposed, dead or dying, and was carried carefully to

Harpham Hall, where, under the care of Lady St. Quentin and the application of restoratives, she recovered sufficiently to be removed the following day to her home. Although she was restored to sensibility she was suffering acutely from the blow, and was placed in bed in a state of utter prostration; she remained so for a few days, becoming weaker gradually, until, despite the tender nursing of her sisters, and the best medical advice that York could afford, she fell a victim to the brutal attack of the robbers, and was buried in the church of Burton Agnes.

"During these few intervening days she was alternately sensible and delirious; but in whichever state she was, her thoughts seemed to turn on what had latterly been the passion of her life—her affection for her fondly loved home. 'Sisters,' said she, 'never shall I sleep peacefully in my grave in the churchyard unless I, or a part of me at least, remain here in our beautiful home as long as it lasts. Promise me this, dear sisters, that when I am dead my head shall be taken from my body and preserved within these walls. Here let it for ever remain, and on no account be removed. And understand and make it known to those who in future shall become possessors of the house, that if they disobey this my last injunction, my spirit shall, if so able and so permitted, make such a disturbance within its walls as to render it uninhabitable for others so long as my head is divorced from its home.' Her sisters, to pacify her, promised to obey her instructions, but without any intention of keeping the promise, and the body was laid

entire and unmutilated under the pavement of the church.

"About a week after the interment, as the inhabitants of the Hall were preparing one evening to retire to rest, they were alarmed by a sudden and loud crash in one of the up-stairs rooms; the two sisters and the domestics rushed up together in great consternation, but after much trembling came to the conclusion that some heavy piece of furniture had fallen, and the men-servants, of whom there were two in the house, went up-stairs to ascertain the cause of the noise, but were not able to find anything to account for it. The household became still more alarmed at this report, and for a long time were afraid to go to bed; but hearing nothing further, at length retired, and the night passed away without further disturbance. Nothing more occurred until the same night in the following week, when the inmates were aroused from sleep in the dead of the night by a loud clapping to, seemingly, of half a dozen of the doors. With fear-stricken countenances and hair standing on end, they struck lights and mustered up sufficient courage to go over the house. They found all the doors closed, but for a while the clapping continued, but always in a different part of the house, remote from where they were. At length the disturbance ceased, and as nothing untoward followed the noise of the preceding week, they again ventured to return to their beds, where they lay sleepless and quaking with fear until daylight.

"Another week of quietness passed away, but on the corresponding night they were again disturbed by what

appeared to be a crowd of persons hurrying along the galleries and up and down the stairs, which was followed by a sound of groaning as from a dying person. On this occasion they were all too terrified to leave their beds, but lay crouching under the bed-clothes perspiring with fear. The following day the female servants fled from the house, refusing to remain any longer in companionship with the ghost which, they all concluded, was the author of the unearthly noises.

"The two ladies took counsel with their neighbour, Mr., afterwards Sir, William St. Quintin and the Vicar of the parish. In the course of conversation it occurred to them that the noises took place on the same night of the week that Anne had died, and the sisters remembered her dying words, and their promise that some part of her body should be preserved in the house; also her threat that if her wish were not complied with, she would, if she were so permitted, render the house uninhabitable for others, and it appeared evident that she was carrying out her threat. The question then was: What was to be done in order to carry out her wish, and the clergyman suggested that the coffin should be opened to see if that could throw any light on the matter. This was done the following day, when a ghastly spectacle presented itself. The body lay without any marks of corruption or decay, but the head was disengaged from the trunk, and appeared to be rapidly assuming the semblance of a fleshless skull. This was reported to the ladies, who, although terrified at the idea, agreed to the suggestion of the Vicar that the skull

should be brought to the house, which was done, and so long as it was allowed to remain undisturbed on the table where it was placed, the house was not troubled with visitations of a ghostly nature.

"Many attempts have since been made to rid the Hall of the skull, but without success; as whenever it has been removed the ghostly knockings have been resumed, and no rest or peace enjoyed until it has been restored. On one occasion a maid-servant threw it from the window upon a passing load of manure, but from that moment the horses were not able to move the waggon an inch, and despite the vigorous whipping of the waggoner, all their efforts were in vain, until the servant confessed what she had done, when the skull was brought back into the house, and the horses drew the waggon along without the least difficulty. On another, one of the Boyntons caused it to be buried in the garden, when the most dismal wailings and cries kept the house in a state of disquietude and alarm until it was dug up and restored to its place in the Hall, when they ceased."

A correspondent of Mr. Ross, to whom, indeed, that gentleman was indebted for some of the particulars already given, furnished him with the following account of his own personal experience of the Burton Agnes hauntings, gained during a night spent at the Hall. He writes:—

"Some forty years ago, John Bilton, a cousin of mine, came from London on a visit to the neighbourhood, and having a relative, Matthew Potter, who was a gamekeeper on the estate, and resided in the Hall, he

paid him a visit, and was invited to pass the night there. Potter, however, told him that, according to popular report, the house was haunted, and that if he were afraid of ghosts he had better sleep elsewhere; but John, who was a dare-devil sort of a fellow, altogether untinctured by superstitious fancies, replied, 'Afraid! not I, indeed; I care not how many ghosts there may be in the house so long as they do not molest me.' Potter then told him of the skull and the portrait of 'Awd Nance,' and asked him if he would like to see the latter; the skull, it would appear, from what followed, was not then in the house. He replied that he should like to see the picture, and they passed into the room where it was hanging, and Potter held up the candle before the portrait, when, in a moment, and without any apparent cause, the candle became extinguished, and defied all attempts at 'blowing in again,' and they were obliged to grope their way to the bed-room in the dark. They occupied the same bed, and Potter was soon asleep and snoring; but Bilton, ruminating over the tale of the skull and the curious circumstance of the sudden extinguishment of the light in front of the portrait of the ghost, lay awake. When he had lain musing for half an hour, he heard a shuffling of feet outside the chamber door, which at first he ascribed to the servants going to bed, but as the sounds did not cease, but kept increasing, he nudged his bed-fellow, and said, 'Matty, what the deuce is all that row about?' 'Jinny Yew-lats' (owls), replied his companion, in a half-waking tone, and turning over, again began to snore. The

noises became more uproarious, and it seemed as if ten or a dozen persons were scuffling about in the passage just outside, and rushing in and out of the rooms, slamming the doors with great violence, upon which he gave his friend another vigorous nudge in the ribs, exclaiming, 'Wake up, Matty; don't you hear that confounded row? What does it all mean?' 'Jinny Yewlats,' again muttered his bed-fellow. 'Jinny Yewlats,' replied Bilton, 'Jinny Yewlats can't make such an infernal uproar as that.' Matty, who was now more awakened, listened a moment, and then said, 'It's Awd Nance, but ah nivver take any notice of her,' and he rolled over and again began to snore. After this 'the fun grew fast and furious,' a struggling fight seemed to be going on outside, and the clapping of the doors reverberated in the passage like thunder-claps. He expected every moment to see the chamber door fly open, and Awd Nance with a troop of ghosts come rushing in, but no such catastrophe occurred, and after a while the noises ceased, and about daylight he fell asleep." The writer adds that his cousin, though a fear-nought and a thorough disbeliever in the supernatural, told him that he never passed so fearful a night before in his life, and would not sleep another night in the place if he were offered the Hall itself for doing so. He further adds that his cousin was a thoroughly truthful man, who might be implicitly believed, and that he had the narrative from his own lips on the following day."

CALGARTH.

In a series of articles on the English Lakes, contributed by Mr. Moncure D. Conway to *Harper's Magazine*, are many little quaint bits of legendary lore, collected here and there in happily styled "Wordsworthshire." One curious story told by our American cousin respecting the manner in which an ancient building near Ambleside is haunted, and the cause of this visitation, must be told in his own words, as there does not appear to be any other available source of information.

"As we gained the height beyond Bowness, on the road to Ambleside," relates Mr. Conway, "we paused for some time; and while my comrade the artist . . . passes an hour of ecstasy over the southward view of Windermere, my eyes were dwelling on an ancient farm and homestead over against the northward water, with which is associated one of the weird legends of this region. Calgarth is the name of it, and it is not picturesque enough for the guide-books to do more than mention it. Miss Martineau praises the owner for leaving depressions in his walls in order that travellers may look across his estate to the scenery beyond, and mentions that the arms of the Phillipsons are still there in the kitchen, carved amid a profusion of arabesque devices over the ample fire-place. But none of our professional guides appear to have got hold of the story of the place as it is known to the more aged peasants.

"It runs that Calgarth (which seems to be from Old

Norse *Kálgarde*, a vegetable garden) was a bit of ground owned by a humble farmer named Kraster Cook and his good wife Dorothy. But their little inheritance was coveted by the chief aristocrat and magistrate of the neighbourhood, Myles Phillipson. The Phillipsons were a great and wealthy family, but they could not induce Kraster and Dorothy to sell them this piece of ground to complete their estate. Myles Phillipson swore he 'd have that ground, be they 'live or deead'; but as time went on, he appeared to be more gracious, and once he gave a great Christmas banquet to the neighbours, to which Kraster and Dorothy were invited. It was a dear feast for them. Phillipson pretended they had stolen a silver cup, and sure enough it was found in Kraster's house—a 'plant' of course. The offence was then capital; and as Phillipson was the magistrate, Kraster and Dorothy were sentenced to death. In the court-room, Dorothy arose, glowered at the magistrate, and said, with words that rang through the building:—

"'Guard thyself, Myles Phillipson! Thou thinkest thou hast managed grandly; but that tiny lump of land is the dearest a Phillipson has ever bought or stolen; for you will never prosper, neither your breed; whatever scheme you undertake will wither in your hand; the side you take will always lose; the time shall come no Phillipson will own an inch of land; and while Calgarth walls shall stand, we 'll haunt it night and day —never will ye be rid of us!'

"Thenceforth the Phillipsons had for their guests two skulls. They were found at Christmas at the head

of a stairway; they were buried in a distant region, but they turned up in the old house again. The two skulls were burned again and again; they were brayed to dust and cast to the wind; they were several years sunk in the lake; but the Phillipsons never could get rid of them. Meanwhile old Dorothy's weird went on to its fulfilment, until the family sank into poverty, and at length disappeared."

The well-known Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, was at one time an occupant of Calgarth, and, whilst residing there, in order to satisfy local fears, went through a solemn form of "laying" the two ghostly skulls. For a time, at least, this had the desired effect, and Dorothy and Kraster have remained quiet of late years.

CALVERLEY HALL.

CALVERLEY is an old-fashioned village in Yorkshire, chiefly known to historians and strangers as the scene of a terrible tragedy which took place early in the 17th century. The Hall, although now modernised and otherwise mutilated, and subdivided into seven dwellings, still retains many remains of its ancient picturesqueness. Once the residence of the ancient Calverley family, whose pedigree is traced back to the time of the Empress Maud, and of whom Mr. John Batty has preserved records, in his *History of Rothwell*, as far

back as 1457, and amongst whose most distinguished scions may be mentioned the late C. S. Calverley, the poet, old Calverley Hall was formerly a place of great importance as well as mediæval comfort. Mr. William Scruton, in *The Yorkshireman* of January 5th, 1884, describes fully the present condition of the fine old place, telling of traces of ancient carving; of oak ceilings and battlemented corbels; of decorated Gothic windows, and of many vestiges of the former grandeur of the place.

One chamber in particular is not only noteworthy on account of its fine oaken panelling and archaic specimens of fresco work, but because it was therein that the "bloodie deed" which has rendered the place for ever dreadful and dreaded was committed. The doorway, says Mr. Scruton, which led to the flight of steps down which Walter Calverley threw the servant, is now blocked up.

The story of the tragedy connected with Calverley Hall has been a favourite theme for authors and antiquarians from the days of John Whitaker, to those of John Timbs, but all that is necessary to repeat of it here may be given from a very condensed account by Mr. Samuel Margerison, of Calverley, cited in the above number of *The Yorkshireman*. He says:—

"Walter Calverley, whose father was a rich Roman Catholic, was a wild, reckless man, though his wife was a most estimable and virtuous lady. It is said that he inherited insanity from his mother's family. Be that as it may, on the 23rd of April, 1604, he went into a

fit of insane frenzy of jealousy, or pretended so to do. The fact was he had completely beggared himself, and got 'over head and ears' into debt. Money-lenders were pressing him hard, and he had become desperate. Rushing madly into the house he snatched up one and then another of his children; plunged his dagger into them, threw them down, and then attempted to take the life of their mother. A steel corset which she wore was luckily in the way, and saved her life. The assassin, however, thought he had killed her, and left hurriedly. He then mounted his horse, intending to kill the only other child he had, Henry, a 'brat at nurse,' who was then at Norton. He was pursued by some villagers: his horse fell and threw him off, and so he was caught. When brought to trial at York he refused to plead, knowing that thereby his estates would not be forfeited to the Crown, but would descend to his surviving son. [And this according to the well-known law of *peine forte et dure*.]

"Walter Calverley was punished for his crime by being pressed to death at York Castle. Tradition saith that an old servant was with him when they were putting the stones on his chest that were to crush out his life, and that the wretched criminal begged him to put him out of his misery by sitting on the stones, saying, 'A pund o' more weight lig on, lig on.' The old servant complied with his request, but was straightway hanged for his pains. Walter was buried at St. Mary's, Castlegate, York; but there is a tradition that, after several pretended interments, his body was secretly buried at

Calverley, among the remains of the sixteen previous generations of the Calverleys."

Little wonder that after so dire a tragedy, Calverley and its precincts were regarded as haunted ground. Walter's spirit, says Mr. Scruton, could not rest. He was often seen galloping about the district at night on a headless horse, and was generally accompanied by a number of followers similarly mounted, who delighted to run down any poor benighted folks who happened to be thereabouts. These spectral horsemen generally disappeared into a cave in the wood, but this cave has now been quarried away. At last the ghostly horseman became so troublesome that the Vicar of Calverley Church undertook the task of laying it, and, for a time at least, succeeded in getting rid of the "Bogie." Walter was not to appear again, "as long as hollies grew green in Calverley Wood." The hollies still grow green in that wood, but, apparently, something has occurred to prevent the spell from being quite successful, as the following incidents would seem to show.

The Rev. Richard Burdsall, a devoted Wesleyan preacher, having to preach at Calverley, about a century ago, was entertained as a guest at the Hall, on a certain Saturday evening in the month of January. "About twelve o'clock," records the rev. gentleman, "I was conducted up one pair of stairs into a large room which was surrounded by an oaken wainscot after the ancient plan. . . . After my usual devotions I laid down to rest. I had not been asleep long before I thought something crept up to my breast, pressing me much. I

was greatly agitated, and struggled hard to awake. In this situation, according to the best judgment I could form, the bed seemed to swing as if it had been slung in slings, and I was thrown out on the floor. When I came to myself I soon got on my knees, and returned thanks to God that I was not hurt. Committing myself to His care, I got into bed the second time. After lying for about fifteen minutes, reasoning with myself whether I had been thrown out of bed, or whether I had got out in my sleep, to satisfy me fully on this point, I was clearly *thrown out a second time* from between the bed-clothes to the floor, by just such a motion as before described. I quickly got on my knees to pray to the Almighty for my safety, and to thank Him that I was not hurt. After this I crept under the bed, to feel if there was anything there; but I found nothing. I got into bed for the third time. Just as I laid myself down I was led to ask, 'Am I in my right senses?' I answered, 'Yes, Lord, if ever I had any.' I had not lain a minute before I was *thrown out of bed a third time.* After this I once more crept under the bed to ascertain whether all the cords were fast, and examined until I touched all the bed-posts; but I found all right. This was about one o'clock. I now put on my clothes, not attempting to lie down any more. . . . I was afterwards told that this very house had formerly been the residence of Calverley, who, in the reign of King James, was tried at York for the murder of his wife and two children, and, standing neuter, was pressed to death in the castle."

Such is the worthy preacher's record of the way in which he was tormented in the haunted Hall; but other, and more recent manifestations of spectral agency, are believed to have taken place. "The last mad freak of the ghost of poor Walter Calverley," according to Mr. Scruton, took place about twelve years ago, when, towards the close of the year, "the bell in the church tower began to toll at one o'clock in the morning, and went on tolling for a long, long time. Men came rushing to the scene, some of whom had come out of warm, comfortable beds, and some who had not been in bed at all. All were struck dumb with terror and cold. The keys could not be found. Toll, toll, toll! still went out the mysterious sounds in the night winds. At last came the keys; but just as they rattled at the keyhole the noise stopped, and all was silent as death."

Although such supposed direct manifestations of Walter Calverley's ghostly powers have not been repeated of late, certain weird signs of the tragedy are, it is said, still visible. Stains of blood—irremovable stains—are yet to be seen on the floor; and there is a flag, *one particular flag*, in the cellar, which always has a mysterious damp place on it; all the other flags are dry save this. "Wise men have tried," says Mr. Scruton, "to account for this; but, as yet, have signally failed. Here it is, plain to be seen, and what one *sees*, one *can* believe."

A correspondent writes that a Bradford paper, published in March 1874, in an article entitled *Calverley, Forty Years Ago*, gives the following anecdote in

proof of how strong an impression had been made upon the public mind by the old legend connected with this place. The writer of the article describes how, in his youthful days, he assisted at an attempt to raise the ghost of the old murderous squire; the *modus operandi*, he says, was as follows:—

About a dozen of the scholars having leisure, and fired with the imaginative spirit, used to assemble after school-hours close to the venerable church of Calverley and then put their hats and caps down on the ground, in a pyramidal form. Then, taking hold of each other's hands, they formed a "magic circle," holding firmly together, and making use of an old refrain:—

"Old Calverley, old Calverley, I have thee by the ears,
I'll cut thee into collops, unless thee appears."

Whilst this incantation was going on, crumbs of bread (saved from their dinner), and mixed with pins, were strewn on the ground, the meanwhile the lads tramped round in the circle with a heavy tread. Some of the more venturesome boys had to go round to each of the church doors, and whistle aloud through the key-holes, repeating the magical couplet which their comrades in the circle were chanting. At this culminating point a pale and ghostly figure was expected to appear, and, on one occasion, some such apparition does seem to have issued forth, apparently from the church. The lads, in their terrified haste to avoid the ghost's fearful grasp, scampered off as fast as their legs would carry them, leaving their hats and caps scattered about the ground as legitimate spoil for old Calverley.

CHARTLEY PARK.

ONE of the most *bizarre* superstitions of any time or clime is connected with Chartley, near Lichfield, a seat of the Ferrers family. When the immense possessions of the Ferrers were forfeited by the attainder of the Earl after his defeat at Burton Bridge, where he led the rebellious barons against Henry the Third, the Chartley estate, being settled in dower, was alone reserved to the family.

In the Park of Chartley, still described as a wild and romantic spot, untouched by the hand of the agriculturist, and left in its primitive state, is preserved a singular species of wild cattle, declared to be indigenous, and of a race nearly extinct. In Bewick's *Quadrupeds*, the principal external appearances which distinguish this breed of cattle from all others are thus described: "their colour is invariably white, muzzles black; the whole of the inside of the ear, and about one third of the outside, from the tip downwards, red; horns white with black tips, very fine, and bent upwards."

In the year the battle of Burton Bridge was fought and lost, a *black* calf was born in this unique race; and the downfall of the grand house of Ferrers happening about the same time, gave rise to the tradition, still current, that the birth of a dark-hued, or parti-coloured calf from the wild breed in Chartley Park, is a sure *omen of death* within the same year to a member of the Ferrers family. It is a noticeable coincidence, says

the *Staffordshire Chronicle* of July 1835, that a calf of this description has been born whenever a death has happened in the family of late years. The decease of the seventh Earl Ferrers, and of his countess, and of his son, Viscount Tamworth, and of his daughter, Mrs. William Jolliffe, as well as the deaths of the son and heir of the eighth Earl, and of his daughter, Lady Francis Shirley, were each preceded by the ominous birth of the fatal-hued calf. In the spring of 1835 an animal perfectly black was calved by one of this mysterious tribe, in the Park of Chartley, and the portentous event was speedily followed by the death of the Countess, the second wife of the eighth Earl Ferrers.

This *outré* family tradition has served for the groundwork of a romantic, once popular novel, entitled *Chartley, or the Fatalist.*

CLEGG HALL.

In Roby and Wilkinson's suggestive work on *Lancashire Legends,* to which we are indebted for some of the traditions in this volume, is an account of the Clegg Hall tragedy. The story, as given in the work just referred to, is as follows:—

"Clegg Hall, about two miles N.E. from Rochdale, stands on the only estate within the parish of Whalley which still continues in the local family name. On this

site was the old house built by Bernulf de Clegg and Quenilda his wife, as early as the reign of Stephen. Not a vestige of it remains. The present comparatively modern erection was built by Theophilus Ashton, of Rochdale, a lawyer, and one of the Ashtons of Little Clegg, about the year 1620. After many changes of occupants, it is now in part used as a country ale-house; other portions are inhabited by the labouring classes, who find employment in that populous manufacturing district. It is the property of the Fentons, by purchase from the late John Entwisle, Esq., of Foxholes.

"To Clegg Hall, or rather what was once the site of that ancient house, tradition points through the dim vista of past ages as the scene of an unnatural and cruel tragedy. It was in the square, low, dark mansion, built in the reign of Stephen, that this crime is said to have been perpetrated,—one of those half-timbered houses, called 'post-and-petrel,' having huge main timbers, crooks, &c., the interstices being wattled and filled with a compost of clay and chopped straw. Of this rude and primitive architecture were the houses of the English gentry in former ages. Here, then, was that horrible deed perpetrated which gave rise to the stories yet extant relating to the 'Clegg Hall boggarts.' The prevailing tradition is not exact as to the date of its occurrence; but it is said that some time about the thirteenth or fourteenth century, a tragedy resembling that of the 'Babes in the Wood' was perpetrated here. A wicked uncle destroyed the lawful heirs of Clegg Hall and estates—two orphan children that

were left to his care—by throwing them over a balcony into the moat, in order that he might seize on their inheritance. Ever afterwards—so the story goes—the house was the reputed haunt of a troubled and angry spirit, until means were taken for its removal, or rather expulsion.

"Of course, this 'boggart,'" says Mr. Wilkinson, "could not be the *manes* of the murdered children, or it would have been seen as a plurality of spirits; but was, in all likelihood, the wretched ghost of the ruffianly relative, whose double crime would not let him rest in the peace of the grave. Even after the original house was almost wholly pulled down, and that of A.D. 1620 erected on its site, the 'boggart' still haunted the ancient spot; and its occasional visitations were the source of the great alarm and annoyance to which the inmates were subjected. From these slight materials, Mr. Roby has woven one of those fictions, full of romantic incident, which have rendered his *Traditions of Lancashire* * so famous. We have taken such facts only," concludes Mr. Wilkinson, "as seem really tra-

* "It is only just to state," remarks Mr. Wilkinson, "that the story of 'Clegg Hall Boggart' was communicated to Mr. Roby by Mr. William Nuttall, of Rochdale, author of *Le Voyageur*, and the composer of a ballad on the tradition. In this ballad, entitled 'Sir Roland and the Clegg Hall Boggart,' Mr. Nuttall makes Sir Roland murder the children in bed with a dagger. Remorse eventually drove him mad, and he died raving during a violent storm. The Hall was ever after haunted by the children's ghosts, and also by demons, till St. Antonea (St Anthony) with a relic from the Virgin's shrine, exorcised and laid the evil spirits."

ditionary, recommending the lovers of the marvellous to the work just cited for a very entertaining tale on this subject."

To this meagre if suggestive account of a popular story, may be added, that in a curious manuscript volume, now, or recently, the property of Dr. Charles Clay, of Manchester, Mr. Nuttall notes that "many ridiculous tales were told of the two boggarts of Clegg Hall, by the country people." That there were two, all local accounts would seem to testify. "At one time," proceeds Mr. Nuttall, "they (the country people) unceasingly importuned a pious monk in the neighbourhood to exorcise or 'lay the ghosts,' to which request he consented. Having provided himself with a variety of charms and spells, he boldly entered on his undertaking, and in a few hours brought the ghosts to a parley. They demanded, as a condition of future quiet (the sacrifice of) a body and a soul. The spectators (who could not see the ghosts), on being informed of their desire, were petrified, none being willing to become the victim. The cunning monk told the tremblers: 'Bring me the body of a cock, and the sole of a shoe.' This being done, the spirits were forbidden to 'revisit the pale glimpses of the moon' till the whole of the sacrifice was consumed. Thus ended the first laying of the Clegg Hall boggarts."

Unfortunately, the plan of laying the ghosts adopted by the wily priest has not proved permanently successful; whether the "sacrifice" has been wholly consumed, or the fact that the spirit of the demand not being

truly acceded to is the cause, is, of course, unknown, but, for some reason or other, the two ghosts continue to walk, and the belief in their appearance is as complete and as general as ever.

COMBERMERE ABBEY.

THE following account of an apparition haunting a room in Combermere Abbey is from *All the Year Round*, in which journal, however, the writer, who derived the story from the persons chiefly concerned, only gives their initials. Combermere Abbey, in Cheshire, it should be stated, stands in a delightful richly-timbered park, many of the trees being of great age and size. The ancient abbey was founded in the twelfth century, by Hugh de Malbanc, and its site was selected with the taste generally shown by the Cistercian order in the selection of sites for their habitations. It is one of the most romantic spots in the whole county, and is situated on the banks of a natural lake. This lake, at present about three-quarters of a mile in length, winds about like a river, and appears, from a general view of the surrounding ground, to have formerly wound round the back of the abbey, and thus to have formed a natural moat, a very needful appendage in those days to all buildings of any pretensions in that neighbourhood of Welsh marauders.

Upon the dissolution of monasteries, in the 34th year of Henry the Eighth's reign, the abbey was granted to George Cotton, Esq., and has since been held and inhabited by his lineal descendants, without interruption, down to the present day—Viscount Combermere, the present possessor, being the representative of the family. A part of the ancient conventual buildings was preserved in the mansion which the Cottons erected on acquiring the property, a portion of which was the monastic refectory, now converted into a handsome library, hung round with ancient portraits of different members of the family. The antique appearance of the old walls has, however, been entirely destroyed by modern alterations.

Connected with this fine old mansion is the following story, given in *All the Year Round*, on the 24th of December 1870. The narrator pointedly remarks that "Direct ocular evidence, or the strongest circumstantial evidence, being the rule in courts of law, nothing is hereafter stated on the warrant of the writer that would not be considered good legal evidence. The facts come direct from the witnesses themselves, and were by them repeated to the writer." He then proceeds to state that Combermere Abbey, in Cheshire, the ancestral seat of the Cotton family, is the scene to which the writer invites the reader's attention.

"The old part of this fine old mansion has been made into bed-rooms and offices, not being in keeping with the splendour of modern requirements. Thus, what used to be called the 'coved saloon' was first degraded into a nursery, and is now used as a bed-room. When

the late Lord Cotton grew old, this room, in which he had played as a child, was occupied by his niece, Miss P., who before her marriage resided in the house. Lady Cotton's dressing-room was only divided from the 'coved saloon' by a short corridor.

"One evening Miss P. was alone, dressing for a very late dinner, and as she rose from her toilet-glass to get some article of dress, she saw standing near her bed—a little iron one, placed out in the room away from the wall—the figure of a child dressed in a very quaint frock, with an odd little ruff round its neck. For some moments Miss P. stood and stared, wondering how this strange little creature could have entered her room. The full glare of the candle was upon its face and figure. As she stood looking at it, the child began to run round the bed in a wild distressed way, with a look of suffering in its little face.

"Miss P., still more and more surprised, walked up to the bed and stretched out her hand, when the child suddenly vanished, how or where she did not see, but apparently into the floor. She went at once to Lady Cotton's room, and inquired of her to whom the little girl could belong she had just seen in her room, expressing her belief that it was supernatural, and describing her odd dress and troubled face.

"The ladies went down to dinner, for many guests were staying in the house. Lady Cotton thought and thought over this strange appearance. At last she remembered that Lord Cotton had told her that one of his earliest recollections was the grief he felt at the

sudden death of a little sister of whom he was very fond, fourteen years old. The two children had been playing together in the nursery—the same 'coved saloon'—running round and round the bed overnight. In the morning, when he woke, he was told she had died in the night, and he was taken by one of the nursery-maids to see her laid out on her little bed in the 'coved saloon.' The sheet placed over her was removed to show him her face. The horror he had felt at the first sight of death made so vivid an impression on him that in extreme old age he still recalled it. The dress and face of the child, as described by Miss P., agreed precisely with his remembrance of his sister. Both Lady Cotton and Miss P. related this to the writer."

CUMNOR HALL.

CUMNOR HALL was a large, quadrangular building, ecclesiastical in style, having formerly belonged to the dissolved Monastery of Abingdon, near which Berkshire town it was situated. It has acquired a romantic interest from the poetic glamour flung over it by Mickle, in his ballad of *Cumnor Hall*, and by Sir Walter Scott, in his novel of *Kenilworth*. Both authors allude to it as the scene of Lady Amy Robsart's murder, and, although the contemporary coroner's jury pronounced the lady's death to have been accidental, and modern anti-

quarians* endeavour to exonerate Lord Robert Dudley (afterwards Earl of Leicester) from having had any hand in his wife's tragic end, the matter is still enveloped in mystery.

According to the evidence given before the Coroner, Lady Dudley, on Sunday, the 8th of September, 1560, had ordered all her household to go to a fair then being held at Abingdon. Mrs. Odingsell, her companion, had remonstrated with her for this order, observing that the day was not a proper one for decent folks to go to a fair; whereupon her Ladyship grew very angry, and said, "All *her* people should go." And they went, leaving only Lady Dudley and two other women in the house. Upon their return the unfortunate lady was found dead at the bottom of a flight of stairs, but whether fallen by accident, or through suicide, or flung there by assassins, is, seemingly, an unfathomable mystery.

Sir Walter Scott, taking Mickle's ballad for his authority, assumed that a foul murder had been committed, and, in his romance of *Kenilworth*, gives the following dramatic but purely imaginative account of the affair. Lady Dudley, miscalled the Countess of Leicester,† is described as imprisoned in an isolated tower, approached only by a narrow drawbridge. Halfway across this drawbridge is a trap-door, so arranged that any person stepping upon it would be precipi-

Vide Canon Jackson's paper in *Wiltshire Archæological Magazine* for May 1877, on "Amye Robsart."

† Lord Dudley was not created Earl of Leicester until 29th September 1563, three years after his wife's death.

tated below into a darksome abyss. Varney, the chief villain of the novel, rides into the courtyard and gives a peculiar kind of whistle, which Amy recognises, and, deeming her husband is coming, rushes out, steps on the trap-door, and falls headlong down. "Look down into the vault," says Varney to Foster; "what seest thou?" "I see only a heap of white clothes, like a snow-drift," said Foster. "Oh, God! she moves her arm!" "Hurl something down upon her: thy gold-chest, Tony, it is a heavy one."

The imputation of this terrible crime, derived by Scott from Mickle, was obtained, by the latter, from Ashmole's *Antiquities of Berkshire*, the compiler of which work is said to have found the accusation against Lord Dudley in a book styled *Leicester's Commonwealth*, a publication published in 1584, four years before Dudley's death, and publicly condemned by the Privy Council as an infamous and scandalous libel. It is interesting to know that Amy Robsart, who is believed to have been born at Stansfield Hall, Norfolk, a house which obtained a fearful notoriety some years ago as the scene of the murder of the Jermyns by Rush, was married publicly at Sheen, in Surrey, on 4th June 1550, instead of clandestinely, as generally stated. King Edward the Sixth, then only eleven years old, kept a little diary (preserved in the British Museum), and, says Canon Jackson, to whom we are indebted for much of the information given here, therein alludes to the marriage in these terms:—

"1550, June 4. Sir Robert Dudeley, third sonne to

th' Erle of Warwick, married S. Jon. Robsartes daughter, after wich mariage, ther were certain gentlemen that did strive who shuld first take away a goose's head which was hanged alive on two cross posts."

Although the jury and Lady Dudley's relatives agreed to accept the poor woman's death as accidental, the country folk about Cumnor would not forego their idea that foul play had been resorted to. Ever since the fatal event, the villagers have asserted that "Madam Dudley's ghost did use to walk in Cumnor Park, and that it walked so obstinately that it took no less than *nine parsons* from Oxford 'to lay her.' That they at last laid her in a pond, called 'Madam Dudley's Pond'; and, moreover, wonderful to relate, the water in that pond was never known to freeze afterwards."

Notwithstanding the "laying of Madam Dudley," however, her apparition still contrives at intervals to reappear, and he is a brave, or a foolhardy man, who dares to visit, at nightfall, the haunts of her past life. Mickle's ballad is still applicable:

"And in that Manor now no more
Is cheerful feast and sprightly ball;
For ever, since that dreary hour,
Have spirits haunted Cumnor Hall.

"The village maids, with fearful glance,
Avoid the ancient mossgrown wall;
Nor ever lead the merry dance,
Among the groves of Cumnor Hall.

"Full many a traveller oft hath sighed
And pensive wept the countess's fall,
As, wandering onward, they espied
The haunted towers of Cumnor Hall."

DE BURGH CASTLE.

THERE is, or perhaps it would be better to say, there was, according to the account given in Ottway's work on apparitions, a very ancient castle in Lancashire, near Liverpool, called Castle de Burgh, belonging to a family of that name. Some years since, Mr. de Burgh, the owner, died, and the castle was then let out to some of the tenantry, among whom was a carpenter. One evening, about two years after the death of Mr. de Burgh, as this carpenter was employed in his workshop, a quarter of a mile or so from the castle, melting glue, and only four of his men with him, he perceived a gentleman in mourning passing the lathe where the men were at work. He was immediately seized with a violent trembling and weakness, his hair stood on end, and a clammy sweat spread over his forehead. The lights were put out, he knew not how, and, at last, in fear and terror, he was obliged to return home. On his arrival at the castle, as he was passing up the stairs, he heard a footstep behind him, and, on turning round, he perceived the same apparition. He hastily entered his room, bolted, locked, and barred the door, but, to his horror and surprise, these offered no impediment to his ghostly visitor, for the door sprang open at his touch, and he entered the room! The apparition was seen by various others, all of whom asserted it bore the strongest resemblance to their deceased master! One gentleman spoke to it, and the spirit told him "that he was not

happy." Here our information rests, and whether the apparition has ceased from troubling or not, we have no recent evidence to show.

DENTON HALL.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of the following account of Denton Hall is derived from notes and information kindly furnished to us by William Aubone Hoyle, Esquire, the present occupant of the famous old mansion. From Mr. Hoyle's description we learn that the Hall is situated a few miles distant from Newcastle-on-Tyne, on the Carlisle road, and close to the site of the old wall of Severus. It is a venerable building, standing on a gentle eminence, embosomed in trees. Its time-worn aspect amply confirms the antiquity it boasts of; records carrying its history back to the very beginning of the sixteenth century being extant; but the original building was far older. It is said to have been built of stones taken from the old Roman wall. The east and west fronts, partially overgrown with ivy, are of a very picturesque aspect; the exterior of the edifice is a plain but interesting example of a manorial residence of the Tudor period, with that excessive solidity characteristic of ancient dwellings near the Border. It has been stated that many of the windows, especially those near the ground, formerly resembled narrow

arrow-slits, rather than apertures for the admission of light and air, but nothing about the Denton Hall of to-day affords the slightest evidence of such having ever been the case.

About a century ago, while the old Hall was in the occupancy of the famous Mrs. Montagu, the interior underwent a destructive process of modernizing, being fitted up in the George the Third style, and many of its antique characteristics hidden or disfigured. The original windows still remain, divided into three, four, or five lights, by stone mullions, whilst some of the old carved fire-places preserve their original appearance, one in the kitchen being seventeen feet wide.

This old Hall, which for several generations was the mansion-house of the lords of the manor in which it stands, is approached by a short avenue of fine old trees. It does not boast a very extensive prospect, but is surrounded by pretty gardens. The traces of a moat are stated to have been once discernible, but no vestige of it now remains. In this antique house and its grounds, says Mr. Hoyle, "we tread on ground which once knew footsteps yet more venerable than those of its builders. History and tradition indicate this spot as once occupied by the ministers of religion, and there is good reason to believe that a chapel was maintained here by the Monks of Tynemouth, when they were lords of this fair estate. Traces of a chapel and cemetery have been found in the gardens, and a carved baptismal font is still preserved." As is usual with nearly all antique buildings once used for ecclesiastical purposes,

tradition assigns underground communications to Denton; a passage having existed formerly, so it is asserted, between the Hall and the Priory, by means of which the monks could quit and return to their convent, on business or pleasure, without being exposed to public observation. In the lower garden, supposed to have served as a cemetery for the monks, have been found at intervals stone coffins and other relics of its former occupants; and in digging for the formation of the pleasure garden to the south of the Hall, steps, supposed to lead to a vaulted chamber, were disclosed.

Records of families connected with the Hall extend back to the time of Edward the Second, in the ninth year of whose reign John de Denton obtained from the King a grant of certain lands. He died before 1325, but his descendants for some generations held possession of the surrounding property. In 1380, the manor of Denton was assigned, by the King's license, to the Prior and Convent of Tynemouth, a small lien only being held by the original family. Shortly after the Reformation the property is found to be in the hands of the Erringtons, a family connected by marriage with, and descended from the Dentons. The Erringtons took an active part in the affairs of the country; one of them, Lancelot Errington, aided by his nephew Mark, by a ruse capturing Holy Island Castle on behalf of James Stuart, the old Chevalier, in the Rebellion of 1715. Denton next passed into the hands of a family named Rogers, and the last of this race dying without issue, in 1760, it became the property of the well-known

Honourable Edward Montagu and the residence of his equally celebrated wife, the famous Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu. This lady resided chiefly at Denton Hall, or Castle as it was then frequently styled, until her death there in 1800, when it became the property of her nephew, Matthew Montagu, afterwards Lord Rokeby, in the possession of whose descendants it still remains.

Mrs. Montagu, whose literary talents and beauty were the frequent themes of her contemporaries, and whose society and conversation were eagerly sought for by them, is recorded by Mr. W. Aubone Hoyle to have "resided long at Denton Hall, and during her lifetime caused it to be the resort of the celebrated men of that period: Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other persons of renown were her guests. A gloomy chamber, rendered still more gloomy by tradition pointing to it as the especial haunt of the spirit of Denton Hall, is called 'Dr. Johnson's Chamber,' but from its window is beheld a pleasant landscape of field, pasture, and wood, whilst to the right some gigantic sycamores throw up their broad green foliage. A shady walk beneath lofty and venerable trees is seen from the window and is known as 'Johnson's walk,' in consequence of the great lexicographer having been fond of its studious seclusion. An old bookcase and desk used by the learned moraliser during his visits to Denton Hall still remain in the house.

"On the demise of Mrs. Montagu, some large boxes filled with letters were left in the attics, and these

letters," Mr. Hoyle records, on his father entering the house, were found to have been burnt by the woman in charge. "On questioning the female Vandal as to her motives for the act, she replied, 'Indeed, we found them very useful, very, for the fires and such like; and they could not be very valuable, there were too many of a sort for that! A vast there were; a vast from one, Mr. Reynolds!'"

For two or three years after the death of Mrs. Montagu the house remained empty, till Richard Hoyle, Esq., of Swift Place, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, took up his residence there, and there his descendants have continued to reside, notwithstanding the fact that their possession of it is disputed, or rather shared, by a supernatural being. That Denton Hall is the abode of this mysterious guest is firmly believed in, even at the present time, not only by the vulgar folk, but by persons of superior education and social rank, we learn from indisputable evidence.

The spirit of Denton Hall not only makes known its presence by sound, but also, at times, by sight. It is a benevolent spirit, apparently, and the old pitmen of the last century are stated to have averred that more than once they have been warned by it to fly from impending danger in the mine. "Examples, supported by credible testimony," remarks our informant, "are not wanting, in which apparitions have fulfilled some office of warning or mercy to beings yet amongst the living; and such seems to be the mission of this spirit. It takes the form of a woman dressed in a white silk

dress of antique fashion, and is commonly called 'Silky,' although also known as 'Old Barbery'; but what being of other days, returned from the regions of silence, or what its object, are questions of mystery, perhaps never to be solved. A dim tradition only remains of a lovely girl falling a victim, by strangling, to the fury of a jealous sister.

"Silky's haunts are not confined to any particular room, although two rooms especially have a ghostly reputation. She has been seen flitting along the passages, up the stone stair-cases, and outside the house in the shady walks. On one occasion, to the terror of an old nurse, she stood silently in the doorway, barring the entrance; on another, she seized the hand of a sleeping inmate of the house, in the middle of the night, and drew it towards her, leaving a touch that was felt with pain for days. A death in the family, however distant, or a warning of good or ill fortune, is frequently marked by her sudden appearance, apparently indiscriminately, to anyone in the house; or the same occasions are marked by unearthly noises. It was but lately (1884) that Silky was heard, apparently dragging something through two unoccupied rooms, down a flight of stairs, to a window which was flung open.

"Instances have occurred," says our correspondent, "of visitors having been so frightened as never to have returned to the house; a notable instance having occurred about fifty years ago, when two sisters of Macready, the famous actor, who were guests, came down one morning to breakfast, and requested to be sent

from the house at once, declaring they would never revisit it. They could never be persuaded to confess what it was that had terrified them.

"On another occasion the door of a bed-room has been noiselessly thrown open, and Silky has rustled into the middle of the room, with a warning arm extended. Silky has rarely been heard to speak, never by any of the present inmates of the Hall; but tradition tells of a visitor being addressed and warned about eighty years ago; and the villagers around Denton have stories of a voice heard at night, of a voice warning them, whenever sickness or death was at any of their doors, and this they attribute to the kindly spirit of Silky."

The tradition of the visitor who was addressed and warned at Denton Hall, may have reference to the account recorded in Moses Richardson's *Table Book of Remarkable Occurrences.* From that work we learn that the lady to whom the spirit spoke told her experiences to Mr. Thomas Doubleday, by whom it was communicated to the work mentioned. The account given in the *Table Book* has evidently undergone some editorial revision, and bears more trace of the romancist's art than of the amateur's diction. Somewhat abridged, the story ascribed to the lady is as follows:—

"A day or two after my arrival at Denton Hall, when all around was yet new to me, I had accompanied my friends to a ball given by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, and returned heartily fatigued, though much delighted. At this time I need not blush, nor you smile, when I say that on that even-

ing I had met, for the second time, one with whose destinies my own were doomed to become connected, and that his attentions to me from that period became too marked and decided to be either evaded or misunderstood.

"I think I was sitting upon an antique carved chair, near to the fire, in the room where I slept, busied in arranging my hair, and probably thinking over some of the events of a scene doomed to be so important to me. Whether I had dropped into a half slumber, as most persons endeavour to persuade me, I cannot pretend to say; but on looking up—for I had my face bent towards the fire—there seemed sitting on a similar high-backed chair on the other side of the ancient tiled fire-place, an old lady, whose air and dress were so remarkable that to this hour they seem as fresh in my memory as they were the day after the vision. She appeared to be dressed in a flowered satin gown, of a cut then out of date. It was peaked and long-waisted. The fabric of the satin had that extreme of glossy stiffness which old fabrics of this kind exhibit. She wore a stomacher. On her wrinkled fingers appeared some rings of great size and seeming value; but, what was most remarkable, she wore also a satin hood of a peculiar shape. It was glossy like the gown, but seemed to be stiffened either by whalebone or some other material. Her age seemed considerable, and the face, though not unpleasant, was somewhat hard and severe and indented with minute wrinkles. I confess that so entirely was my attention engrossed by what was passing in my

mind, that, though I felt mightily confused, I was not startled (in the emphatic sense) by the apparition. In fact, I deemed it to be some old lady, perhaps a housekeeper, or dependant in the family, and, therefore, though rather astonished, was by no means frightened by my visitant, supposing me to be awake, which I am convinced was the case, though few persons believe me on this point.

"My own impression is that I stared somewhat rudely, in the wonder of the moment, at the hard, but lady-like, features of my aged visitor. But she left me small time to think, addressing me in a familiar half-whisper and with a constant restless motion of the hand which aged persons, when excited, often exhibit in addressing the young. 'Well, young lady,' said my mysterious companion, 'and so you 've been at yon hall to-night! and highly ye 've been delighted there! Yet if ye could see as I can see, or could know as I can know, troth! I guess your pleasure would abate. 'Tis well for you, young lady, peradventure, ye see not with my eyes'—and at the moment, sure enough, her eyes, which were small, grey, and in no way remarkable, twinkled with a light so severe that the effect was unpleasant in the extreme: ''Tis well for you and them,' she continued, 'that ye cannot count the cost. Time was when hospitality could be kept in England, and the guest not ruin the master of the feast—but that 's all vanished now: pride and poverty—pride and poverty, young lady, are an ill-matched pair, Heaven kens!' My tongue, which had at first almost faltered in its office,

now found utterance. By a kind of instinct, I addressed my strange visitant in her own manner and humour. 'And are we, then, so much poorer than in days of yore?' were the words that I spoke. My visitor seemed half startled at the sound of my voice, as at something unaccustomed, and went on, rather answering my question by implication than directly: ''Twas not all hollowness then,' she exclaimed, ceasing somewhat her hollow whisper; 'the land was then the lord's, and that which *seemed*, *was*. The child, young lady, was not then mortgaged in the cradle, and, mark ye, the bride, when she kneeled at the altar, gave not herself up, body and soul, to be the bondswoman of the Jew, but to be the help-mate of the spouse.' 'The Jew!' I exclaimed in surprise, for then I understood not the allusion. 'Ay, young lady! the Jew,' was the rejoinder. ''Tis plain ye know not who rules. 'Tis all hollow yonder! all hollow, all hollow! to the very glitter of the side-board all false! all false! all hollow! Away with such make-believe finery!' And here again the hollow voice rose a little, and the dim grey eye glistened. 'Ye mortgage the very oaks of your ancestors—I saw the planting of them; and now 'tis all painting, gilding, varnishing and veneering. Houses call ye them? Whited sepulchres, young lady, whited sepulchres. Trust not all that seems to glisten. Fair though it seems, 'tis but the product of disease—even as is that pearl in your hair, young lady, that glitters in the mirror yonder, —not more specious than is all,—ay, *all* ye have seen to-night.'

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"As my strange visitor pronounced these words, I instinctively turned my gaze to a large old-fashioned mirror that leaned from the wall of the chamber. 'Twas but for a moment. But when I again turned my head, my visitant was no longer there! I heard plainly, as I turned, the distinct rustle of the silk, as if she had risen and was leaving the room. I seemed distinctly to hear this, together with the quick, short, easy footstep with which females of rank at that period were taught to glide rather than to walk; this I seemed to hear, but of what appeared the antique old lady I saw no more. The suddenness and strangeness of this event for a moment sent the blood back to my heart. Could I have found voice I should, I think, have screamed, but that was, for a moment, beyond my power. A few seconds recovered me. By a sort of impulse I rushed to the door, outside which I now heard the footsteps of some of the family, when, to my utter astonishment, I found it was—locked! I now recollected that I myself locked it before sitting down.

"Though somewhat ashamed to give utterance to what I really believed as to this matter, the strange adventure of the night was made a subject of conversation at the breakfast-table next morning. On the words leaving my lips, I saw my host and hostess exchange looks with each other, and soon found that the tale I had to tell was not received with the air which generally meets such relations. I was not repelled by an angry or ill-bred incredulity, or treated as one of diseased fancy, to whom silence is indirectly recommended as the

alternative of being laughed at. In short, it was not attempted to be concealed or denied that I was not the first who had been alarmed in a manner, if not exactly similar, yet just as mysterious; that visitors, like myself, had actually given way to these terrors so far as to quit the house in consequence; and that servants were sometimes not to be prevented from sharing in the same contagion. At the same time they told me this, my host and hostess declared that custom and continued residence had long exempted all regular inmates of the mansion from any alarms or terrors. The visitations, whatever they were, seemed to be confined to new-comers, and to them it was by no means a matter of frequent occurrence.

"In the neighbourhood, I found, this strange story was well known; that the house was regularly set down as 'haunted,' all the country round, and that the spirit, or goblin, or whatever it was that was embodied in these appearances, was familiarly known by the name of 'Silky.'

"At a distance, those to whom I have related my night's adventure have one and all been sceptical, and accounted for the whole by supposing me to have been half asleep, or in a state resembling somnambulism. All I can say is, that my own impressions are directly contrary to this supposition; and that I feel as sure that I saw the figure that sat before me with my bodily eyes, as I am sure I now see you with them. Without affecting to deny that I was somewhat shocked by the adventure, I must repeat that I suffered no unreasonable

alarm, nor suffered my fancy to overcome my better spirit of womanhood.

"I certainly slept no more in that room, and in that to which I removed I had one of the daughters of my hostess as a companion; but I have never, from that hour to this, been convinced that I did not actually encounter something more than is natural—if not an actual being in some other state of existence. My ears have not been deceived, if my eyes were—which, I repeat, I cannot believe.

"The warnings so strongly shadowed forth have been too true. The gentleman at whose house I that night was a guest has long since filled an untimely grave! In that splendid hall, since that time, strangers have lorded it—and I myself have long ceased to think of such scenes as I partook of that evening—the envied object of the attention of one whose virtues have survived the splendid inheritance to which he seemed destined.

"Whether this be a tale of delusion and superstition, or something more than that, it is, at all events, not without a legend for its foundation. There is some obscure and dark rumour of secrets strangely obtained and enviously betrayed by a rival sister, ending in deprivation of reason, and death; and that the betrayer still walks by times in the deserted Hall which she rendered tenantless, always prophetic of disaster to those she encounters. So has it been with me, certainly; and more than me, if those who say it say true. It is many, many years since I saw the scene of this adventure; but

I have heard that since that time the same mysterious visitings have been more than once renewed; that midnight curtains have been drawn by an arm clothed in rustling silks; and the same form, clad in dark brocade, has been seen gliding along the dark corridors of that ancient, grey, and time-worn mansion, ever prophetic of death or misfortune."

DOBB PARK LODGE.

On the southern slope of a picturesque valley, through which the Washburn pours its waters, stands the ruins of Dobb Park Lodge; a lofty, four-storied mansion of the Tudor period. About half of the original building is supposed to have been pulled down, not to have been destroyed by the slow processes of time, and the remainder to have been left standing, though uninhabitable. In its pristine state the lodge must have been an elegant and spacious pile, and even now, ruined and deserted as it is, it is a picturesque feature in the romantic scenery around. There are some singular *traits* in the building, as, for instance, the fact that, apparently, the only means of access to its interior was by a winding stair in a projecting turret in the rear. Of the southern front of the residence one half remains, and contains square windows of two lights each, divided by a transom. Over the lower, relates a correspondent, is a cornice

embracing both, supported by brackets, ornamented with armorial shields, charged with quoits or circular discs. In the centre are the remains of a projecting semi-circular window. Who lived in this strange and romantically situated abode history tells not. Shaw, the historian of Wharfedale, says: "There was a court held in it long after it was dilapidated, called *Dog Court*, belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster," and that appears to be all that is known of it; although this same authority supposes, omitting all account of its Tudor architecture, that it was erected about the same time as Barden Lodge, a building in existence in 1311.

But if history has neglected Dobb Park Lodge, tradition has not overlooked it; and, amongst other remarkable stories of it, records that the place is haunted by a strange being known as "The Talking Dog." The tale of this marvellous spectre bears a likeness to a well-known Manx, and some other equally famous legends; it has been related to us by Mr. William Grainge, of Harrogate, who obtained it from "a lover of forest lore, a collector and preserver of all that belongs thereto"; but it was taken down in the dialect of the neighbourhood, and to render it comprehensible to the general reader it will be necessary to translate it into the ordinary vernacular. The legend is as follows.

At the foot of the winding stair already alluded to is a doorway (now choked with rubbish) leading into a dungeon. The country folks thereabouts believe this doorway to be the entrance to one of those mysterious

passages, so generally ascribed to old ruins, which lead to some strangely terrible cavern, or other abode of horror. Such unearthly noises were heard to issue from this subterranean place that no one ventured to explore its mysteries; until at length a countryman, one of those ne'er-do-wells who are ever ready to risk what respectable people prudently shrink from, determined to examine it thoroughly, and, in order to fortify himself for the arduous task, he imbibed a no small quantum of potent stimulant.

Thus invigorated, the local Columbus seized his lanthorn, bravely entered the passage, and instantly disappeared in its gloomy recesses. His neighbours and admirers lingered about the place in expectation of his speedy return, but his absence was so prolonged that they became seriously alarmed. At length, when they had all given him up for lost, he reappeared, but in a most wretched, abject, and terrified condition. Some long time afterwards, when he had recovered from his fright, he was induced to give a recital of his adventures, and his account was this:—

"After leaving the doorway, I went for a long distance, rambling and scrambling, turning and twisting about the crooked passages, until I thought I should get to no place at all. So I began to feel rather dazed and tired like, and had some thoughts of turning back again, when, suddenly, the sweetest music that ever I had heard, in all my born days, struck up right before me. I couldn't have turned back then if I had wanted to ever so much, for the sound charmed me completely.

I had never felt so lightsome before, and feared nothing, and could have gone anywhere. I followed up where the music seemed to come from, thinking I should come to it at last, but I was wrong; I have never seen the players to this very day. I kept following the sound until at last I came to what seemed to be a great, long, high, wide room, as big as any church, and bigger than some. At one side of it was a great fire blazing away as bright as the sunshine; and either it, or something else, made everything glitter like gold.

"Thinks I to myself, this is a grand place, and no mistake! But what struck me more than all was a great, black, rough dog, as big as any two or three mastiffs, which stood before the fire, and appeared to be the master of the place, for not another living creature beside it could I see. I was troubled to make him out; I had heard tell of 'barguests,'* but had never seen one, and thought this might be one of them. At last, by all that is true, if the thing did not open its mouth and speak! Not bark like a dog, as it ought to have done, but talked just like one of ourselves. Didn't I feel queer now! I think I just did. That did for me more than all the rest. I wished myself safe out again, and over the mile bridge. It said: 'Now, my man, as you 've come here, you must do one of three things, or you 'll never see daylight again. You must either drink all the liquor there is in that glass; open that chest; or draw that sword.'

* A provincial name for spectres.

"I looked, and there I saw a strange, great chest, seemingly bound with iron bands, and with two or three great iron locks on it. At the top of that chest was placed a fine great glass, with a long stem, full of the nicest-looking drinking-stuff that ever I saw. Above that, on a peg, or something of the sort, against the wall was hung what he called the sword—a great, long, broad, heavy, ugly thing, nearly as long as myself.

"I looked them all over and over, and over again, considering which job to do, for I dursn't, for the life of me, think of not doing what that dog bade me. The chest looked much too strong for me to open—besides, I had no tools with me that would be likely to open it with; and, as for the sword, I knew nought about sword work, I had never held one in my life, and should be quite as likely to cut myself as anyone else with it, so I thought I would let it alone. Then there was naught but the drink left for me, and I began to feel rather dryish, what with rambling about the place so long, and what with the drop of drink I had before I started; so, says I to myself, 'Here goes at the drink!' I took hold of the glass with my hand, the dog all the time glowering at me with all the eyes he had; and, I assure you, he had two woppers—saucers are not so big; they were more like pewter plates, and gleamed and glittered like fire.

"I lifted the glass up to my mouth and just touched my lips with the stuff, to taste before I gave a big swig; when, would you believe it? it scalded just like boiling

water, or burnt like fire itself. All the skin 's off my lips and tongue-end with it yet. If I 'd swallowed all the lot it would have burned my inside clean out, and I should have been as hollow as a drum; but I stopped short of that, or else I should have made a bonnie mess of it. I just tasted the stuff, but what it was I cannot tell; it was not the colour of aquafortis, but it was quite as hot. As soon as ever I tasted it, up flew the lid of the chest with a bonnie bang; and I do declare if it didn't seem to be as full of gold as ever it could cram: I 'd be bound to say there were thousands upon thousands of pounds in that very chest. But I 'm no better for that, nor ever shall be, for I 'll never go there any more. The sword, at the same time, was drawn by somebody's hand that I didn't see, and it glittered and flashed like lightning. I banged the glass down, and don't know whether it broke or not, but all the stuff was spilt. In a minute after all was dark as pitch; the fire went out; my lantern had gone out before; the music gave over playing, and instead of it such a howling and yelling struck up and filled the place as I 'd never heard in my time; it seemed as if hundreds of dogs were all getting walloped at once; and something besides screamed and yelled as if it were frightened out of its wits. Oh, it was awful! I fell down flat on the floor, I think in a swoon, and I could not have done better. How long I lay I cannot tell, but for a goodish bit, I think. At last I came to myself, rubbed my eyes, and glowered about me, and wondered where I was. At last I bethought myself, and scrambled up, and after a

great deal of ups and downs, I got my carcase dragged out; and now, you may depend upon it, you 'll not catch me going in there any more of a sudden."

Such, says Mr. Grainge, was the result of the search for hidden treasure in the ruined vaults of Dobb Park Lodge. Since that time no one appears to have ventured into those subterranean recesses, so that the chest full of gold still remains, waiting for some explorer to brave the terrors of "The Talking Dog" and his surroundings.

DOSMERY POOL.

WHO, knowing anything of Cornwall, but is acquainted with Tregeagle, the Demon of Dosmery Pool, on Bodmin Downs? How long he has haunted "Old Cornwall" is difficult to say; but his terrible howling, when the wintry blast rushes over the Downs, is proverbial, and "to roar like Tregeagle" is a time-honoured saying. Mr. R. Hunt, in his interesting *Popular Romances of the West of England*, recounts many exploits of this famous spirit, whose voice is still heard, and whose shadowy form is even still seen, when the winds are at their highest and the nights are the most stormy.

"Who has not heard of the wild spirit of Tregeagle?" asks Mr. Hunt. "He haunts equally the moor, the

rocky coasts, and the blown sand-hills of Cornwall. From north to south, from east to west, this doomed spirit is heard of, and to the Day of Judgment he is doomed to wander, pursued by avenging fiends. For ever endeavouring to perform some task by which he hopes to secure repose, and being for ever defeated. Who has not heard of the howling of Tregeagle? When the storms come with all their strength from the Atlantic, and urge themselves upon the rocks around Land's End, the howls of the spirit are louder than the roaring of the winds. When calm rests upon the ocean, and the waves can scarcely form upon the resting waters, low wailings creep along the coast. These are the wailings of this wandering soul.

"When midnight is on the moor, or on the mountains, and the night winds whistle amidst the rugged cairns, the shrieks of Tregeagle are distinctly heard. We know that he is pursued by the demon dogs, and that till day-break he must fly with all speed before them."

This Tregeagle, whose attributes are so mysterious and, according to the district where related, so varied, is traditionally reported to be the spirit of a "tyrannical magistrate," a "rapacious and unscrupulous landlord," who was "one of the Tregeagles who once owned Trevorder, near Bodmin." At the demise of this hardened sinner, who had committed more crimes than the decalogue contained, the foul fiend wished to at once obtain possession of what he deemed rightly his, to wit, the criminal's soul; but the wretched man, in the agony of

despair, consigned his wealth to the priesthood, that they might fight with the evil spirits, and save his soul from its just doom.

The power of the priesthood so far prevailed, that as long as Tregeagle's spirit had "some task difficult beyond the power of human nature" to perform, demoniac agency should be unable to carry him away. His tasks were to extend into eternity, so that repentance might have time to gradually work out his sin. His only chance of ultimate salvation was in perpetual toil: as long as he continued his labour the demons could do him no real harm. Frequent were the tussles he had with the fiends: on one occasion his restless spirit is said to have even given evidence in a court of law, when his relentless pursuers vainly endeavoured to carry him off.

Tregeagle's first and most famous task was the emptying of Dosmery Pool, a mountain tarn, some miles in circumference; and local lore would have he is still engaged upon this endless operation. The difficulty of this gigantic labour was increased by the supposed fact that the lonely pool was bottomless; and yet one learned ecclesiastic was not convinced of the hopelessness of the work, and, to decrease the prospect of it ever coming to an end, he proposed that the wretched sinner should only be provided with a limpet shell, with a large hole in it, for the purpose of baling out the water. The Evil One did not lose sight of the doomed Tregeagle, but kept a careful eye on him, and tried every possible means to divert his attention from his

task, in order that he might make him his prey. Still the hapless spirit continued to toil, although on one occasion the fiends almost overcame him. Mr. Hunt's graphic account of the terrific struggle is as follows:—

"Lightnings flashed and coiled like fiery snakes around the rocks of Roughton. Fire-balls fell on the desert moors and hissed in the accursed lake. Thunders pealed through the heavens, and echoed from hill to hill; an earthquake shook the solid earth, and terror was on all living. The winds rose and raged with a fury which was irresistible, and hail beat so mercilessly on all things that it spread death around. Long did Tregeagle stand the 'pelting of the pitiless storm,' but at length he yielded to its force and fled. The demons in crowds were at his heels. He doubled, however, on his pursuers and returned to the lake; but so rapid were they that he could not rest the required moment to dip his shell in the now seething waters. Three times he fled round the lake, and the evil ones pursued him. Then, feeling that there was no safety for him near Dosmery Pool, he sprang swifter than the wind across it, shrieking with agony, and thus—since the devils cannot cross water, and were obliged to go round the lake—he gained on them and fled over the moor. Away, away went Tregeagle, faster and faster, the dark spirits pursuing, and they had nearly overtaken him, when he saw Roach Rock and its chapel before him. He rushed up the rocks, with giant power clambered to the eastern window, and dashed his head through it, thus securing the shelter of its sanctity. The defeated

demons retired, and long and loud were their wild wailings in the air. The inhabitants of the moors and of the neighbouring towns slept not a wink that night."

But the baling out Dosmery Pool was by no means the only task assigned to Tregeagle's unresting spirit. One labour, on the shore near Padstow, was to make trusses of sand and ropes of sand with which to bind up the trusses. Each recurring tide swept away the result of his toil, and, according to the tradition, "the ravings of the baffled soul were louder than the roarings of the winter tempest." By priestly influence Tregeagle was removed to the estuary of the Loo, and ordered to carry sand across to Porthleven. A malicious demon contrived to trip him up, and the contents of his enormous sack supplied the material of the sand-bank out of which was formed the bar that destroyed the harbour.

Land's End was eventually assigned to Tregeagle as a place of labour, a place where, as Mr. Hunt says, "he would find no harbour to destroy, and few people to terrify. His task was to sweep the sands from Porthcurnow Cove round the headland called Tol-Peden-Penwith, into Nanjisal Cove. Those who know that rugged headland, with its cubical masses of granite piled in Titantic grandeur one upon another, will appreciate the task; and when to all the difficulties are added the strong sweep of the Atlantic current,—that portion of the Gulf stream which washes our southern shores,—it will be evident that the melancholy spirit has, indeed, a task which must endure to the world's end. Even until to-day is Tregeagle labouring at his task. In

calms his wailing is heard; and those sounds which some call the 'soughing of the wind,' are known to be the moanings of Tregeagle; while the coming storms are predicted by the fearful roarings of this condemned mortal."

But these excerpts from Mr. Hunt's account by no means exhaust the deeds or doings of this supernatural being, a thorough belief in whose continual existence is prevalent throughout the length and breadth of old Cornwall. Alluding to the widely diffused belief of a spectre huntsman, whose wild chase permeates the legends of so many lands, Mr. Hunt remarks, "The tradition of the Midnight Hunter and his headless hounds, always in Cornwall associated with Tregeagle, prevails everywhere. The Abbot's Way, on Dartmoor, an ancient road which extends into Cornwall, is said to be the favourite coursing ground of the 'wish hounds of Dartmoor,' called also the 'yell hounds.'"

These "yell" or "yeth hounds" form the theme of the beautiful fragmentary "Legend of Dartmoor," by the late Oliver Madox Brown, a legend which the highly talented youth left, unfortunately, unfinished.

EDINBURGH: MARY KING'S CLOSE.

Old Edinburgh was full of quaint, narrow, antiquated passages, some of which still exist, and these "Closes," as they are locally called, contained numerous

houses bearing the reputation of being haunted. Mary King's Close was noted for the many terrible apparitions which had found suitable quarters within its mouldering dwellings. Mary King's Close has disappeared to make way for modern erections; but just two centuries ago, that is to say, in 1685, it was a well-to-do thoroughfare, the residence of a respectable class of people. George Sinclair, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, and afterwards minister of Eastwood, in Renfrewshire, a contemporary of the events he refers to, gives the following account, in *Satan's Invisible World Discovered*, of some terrible apparitions in Mary King's Close, in the house of Mr. Thomas Coltheart, a respectable law agent.

Mr. Coltheart's business having improved, he removed into a superior residence in the Close above-named. Having been warned by some kind neighbour that the house was haunted, the maid-servant decamped in haste, and left Mr. Coltheart and his wife to manage as they best could. On Sunday afternoon Mr. Coltheart, being unwell, retired to rest, whilst his wife seated herself at his bedside and read the Scriptures. Happening to raise her eyes, she was intensely horrified to behold the head of an old man, with grey floating beard, suspended in the air but a short distance off, gazing at her intently with weird, fixed glare. She swooned at the sight, and remained in an insensible condition until the neighbours came back from church. Her husband did his best to reason her out of her credulity, and the evening passed without anything further taking place.

They had not been in bed long, however, before Mr. Coltheart also beheld the phantom head, floating in mid-air, and surveying him with ghostly eyes. He got up and lit a candle, and then betook himself to prayer. An hour passed, when the spectre head was joined by that of a child, also suspended in the air, followed speedily by an arm naked from the elbow, which, despite the lawyer's pious ejaculations, seemed to wish to shake hands with him and his wife! In vain did Mr. Coltheart conjure the phantoms to entrust him with the story of their grievances, so that he might have their wrongs rectified: all was useless. They seemed to regard him and his wife as intruders, and to wish them away. Other phantoms joined them, including that of a dog, which curled itself up on a chair, and seemed to go to sleep! Others—some of a most horrifying and monstrous form—appeared, until the whole room swarmed with them: and the unfortunate couple were compelled to take refuge on the bed. Suddenly, with a deep and awful groan, all the apparitions vanished, and the pious lawyer and his wife were left in peace.

After such a terrifying house-warming, one would suppose that Mr. and Mrs. Coltheart would have got out of the house as quickly as possible; but such was not the case. The brave couple, if Professor Sinclair is to be relied on, continued to reside in the place for many years, and till the day of Mr. Coltheart's death, without any further molestation from the spirits.

About the time of Mr. Coltheart's death, a strange circumstance happened. A client of his who lived at Tranent, ten miles from Edinburgh, was aroused in the night by a nurse, who had been affrighted by "something like a cloud moving about the room." Starting up, the gentleman instinctively seized his sword, when he was confronted by the face and form of his legal adviser and fflend, Thomas Coltheart. "Are you dead?" he demanded; "what is your errand?" whereupon the apparition shook its head twice, and melted away. The gentleman started at once for Edinburgh, and proceeded directly to his friend's house in Mary King's close, and on arriving there found Mrs. Coltheart bewailing her husband's recent death.

EASTBURY HOUSE.

Eastbury House, Tarrant Grenville, near Blandford, owing to the galaxy of famous names surrounding its story, must take a prominent place among the haunted homes of the country. Its career as a residence was short but brilliant. It has been celebrated both in prose and verse by poets and prosateurs, and, for the space of three *lustra* or so, was the glory of Dorset. Thompson introduced it in his *Seasons*, in "Autumn." After alluding to its "green delightful walks," "where simple

nature reigns," he alluded to its more artificial beauties, and apostrophizes them thus,

> The grandeur of thy lofty dome,
> Far-splendid, seizes on the ravished eye,
> New beauties rise with each revolving day;
> New columns swell; and still the fresh Spring finds
> New plants to quicken, and new groves to green.
> Full of thy genius all! the Muses' seat:
> Where in the secret bower, and winding walk,
> For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.

George Bubb Dodington (afterwards Lord Melcombe) of *Diary* fame, whose seat it was, and in whose secret bowers and winding walks he and *Night Thoughts* Young were to be so pleasantly arrayed by the Muses, made Eastbury a meeting-place for the wit and *literati* of the day. Young, Thompson, and Fielding were among the crowd of notables, who enjoyed its pleasures. The last resided at Eastbury some time, and thence dated some of his works. In later days it was visited by Beckford, and its ruins were celebrated in verse by Samuel Marsh Oram, a local writer, of some temporary if transient repute, who died at the early age of twenty-six.

Eastbury was begun by Bubb Dodington in 1718. The future Lord Melcombe had projected the house and grounds on a scale of great magnificence; but when little beyond some less important out-houses had been completed, the work was discontinued, and for six years everything remained at a standstill. Eventually the building was resumed and carried on at an enormous expenditure—the total outlay up to 1738, when

the house was completed, being stated as one hundred and forty thousand pounds, a far higher sum at that time than now-a-days. The park and grounds were laid out on the same magnificent scale as the house, no expense being spared; trees half a century old, and some tons in weight, were transported bodily from distant woods and replanted at Eastbury.

In 1763, a change came over the scene, and Eastbury House was destroyed even more rapidly than it had been created; all the rooms were dismantled, and the splendid furniture scattered to the winds. Twelve years later the ruin was consummated, the house being pulled down, and the beautiful and costly materials disposed of; one wing only was left in naked grandeur, and that still exists, but let in tenements to the day-labourers of the Farquharson estate.

It is little to be wondered at, says Miss Billington, to whom we are chiefly indebted for this account of Eastbury, that a place possessing so chequered a history should bear the reputation of being haunted. The ghostly legend attached to the house is said to be firmly believed in by the inhabitants of Grenville and its neighbourhood, and is to the following effect. Lord Melcombe advanced considerable sums of money, vaguely spoken of now, says Miss Billington, as "many thousands," to his steward William Doggett. The greater part of this loan Doggett is said to have parted with to a brother, who got into "difficulties," and was utterly powerless to repay it. In course of time Lord Melcombe required repayments of his money, and Doggett, unable

to comply with the demand, was reduced to great extremity.

"I am not aware of the exact date at which this took place," says Miss Billington, "but it must have been during the destruction of the house, as the only expedient Doggett could find to meet his liabilities was to appropriate some of the building materials and sell them on his own account. Shortly before Lord Melcombe came down to receive his money, Doggett's courage failed; probably he had a much smaller sum with which to repay his master than he owed; he could not pay him, and, therefore, shot himself.

"It was in a marble-floored room that Doggett committed suicide, and it is said the stains of his blood are still visible. I was told *à propos* of this," says our correspondent, "that the blood-stains of murder or suicide are ineffaceable.

"Since this tragedy, Doggett's ghost has lingered about Eastbury, and the tradition is that, headless, he drove about the park in a spectral coach and four driven by a coachman in livery. No doubt," is the lady's reflection, "the troubled spirit derived a bitter satisfaction from contemplation of the decayed grandeur of the once proud house, now reduced to scarcely a shadow of its former grandeur. But it is many years now since the apparition has made itself visible, though the taint of ghostly inhabitation still clings to the remaining wing of the house. On dark nights, when all else is still, mysterious movements are heard, the doors open and shut unaccountably, pointing to the

inference that the troubled spirit has not yet served its term of earthly wanderings.

"It may not be inappropriate to add," remarks Miss Billington, "that about forty years ago, the old church at Grenville was pulled down, and a new one erected on the same spot: the contractors, wishing to fulfil their undertaking as cheaply as possible, caused the old vaults to be destroyed and their brickwork utilized. The old man who told me much of this story, said it fell to his share to pull Doggett's vault to pieces. They found the self-murdered man's body in fair preservation, and the course of the bullet from the jaw through the head was distinctly visible. The old man described him as 'a short ginger-haired man.' His legs had been tied together with a broad yellow ribbon, which was as fresh and brightly coloured as when it was buried. My informant added that he had abstracted a piece of the ribbon, and a lock of the hair, which he had kept as curiosities for many years, and much regretted that he had not got them still to show to me."

And thus Eastbury, with all its much-vaunted magnificence, the palatial home of the vivacious Bubb Dodington, and the erstwhile staying-place of Fielding and Thompson, of Young and his famous contemporaries, is known only now as having been the house where a fraudulent servant committed suicide!

EWSHOTT HOUSE.

MAJOR EDWARD MOOR, the author, among other works, of the *Hindu Pantheon*, in its day a valued authority upon Indian antiquities, in 1841 published a *brochure* on the "Bealing Bells." This little book not only furnished a full account of the disturbances ascribed to supernatural agency at Bealing, but also gave particulars, derived from various correspondents, of similar manifestations that had occurred in different parts of the country. There is no need of referring to the acrimonious controversy between the believers and sceptics which the publication of Major Moor's little book aroused, our present purpose being merely to cite from the Appendix to it the following account of the hauntings at Ewshott House.

In "Bealing Bells," it may be mentioned, the names of the persons and places hereafter referred to, are left blank; but by means of a copy annotated, probably, by Major Moor, and assisted by private inquiry, they are now, for the first time, filled in. The local topographical and historical *data*, it should be mentioned, are the result of independent research, and are not derived from Major Moor's suggestive little work.

Ewshott House, or Itchell, as it was formerly called, is in the parish of Crondall, in Hampshire. It is a respectable old manor-house, and in very early times was the principal residence of the Giffords, one of the most ancient and eminent families in Hampshire; some

of them filled the office of sheriff of the county in a period ranging from the reign of Henry VI. to that of Elizabeth. It was afterwards a seat of the Bathursts, and was in their possession for several generations. About the year 1680 the chief part of the ancient mansion seems to have been pulled down, and the present house erected in its place. The remaining portion of the old house was allowed to stand, separated only by a party wall, and was let as a farm-house to the tenant of the adjoining property.

The estate came into the possession of Mr. Lefroy in the year 1818; by which time Ewshott had already acquired the reputation of being "haunted." The writer of the account which Major Moor gives, and whom he describes as a gentleman of unimpeachable veracity, and as deservedly held in high estimation, says: "Many tales were told among the neighbouring villagers of uncouth sights and sounds, from which it gained that ill repute. It was not until 1823 that Mr. Lefroy's family resided constantly at Ewshott. During their occasional visits there the peculiar noises of which I am about to speak were often heard; but from the circumstances above related of the old house, which joined the back part of the new, being occupied by a farm establishment, they were thought nothing of; being attributed by the family in the mansion to their neighbours in the farm, and by the inhabitants of the farm to their neighbours in the mansion; each party wondering exceedingly what the other could be doing at so late an hour as that at which the sounds were heard.

"About fifteen years ago," said this correspondent, "the old farm-house was taken down, to be rebuilt at a greater distance from the mansion. During the progress of this work a man was constantly employed in watching round the premises, to guard the timber. This man has often solemnly declared that as he went his rounds he saw . . . . ! But this may have been fancy, and I believe it was; the poor man's ears having inspired his eyes with an unnatural susceptibility of vision. But what he *heard* was not to be mistaken. It was the same the family had heard for years; and have heard, almost nightly, ever since. He described it, 'as a great thumping noise, as if someone was beating heavy blows with a great mallet in the hall.' The hall is exactly in the centre of the house, over against the spot where the old farm-house stood, and therefore very near to the place where he watched. This is as good a description as can be given of the peculiar sound, which is known familiarly as THE GHOST. In the dead of night, when every member of the family has gone to bed, and there is no imaginable cause to be assigned for them, a succession of distinct and heavy blows are heard, as of some massive instrument upon a hollow wall or floor. These sounds are seldom heard more that once in the night; and generally between the hours of twelve and two. They are sometimes so loud as to awaken one from sleep, and startle even those who are the most familiar with them; at other times almost inaudible; sometimes struck with great rapidity, at other times more slowly and leisurely;

varying in duration also in about the same degree. But whether in his noisier or more gentle movements, THE GHOST is so peculiar in his sound, as not to be easily mistaken by those who have once heard him. No one has been able to determine from what part the sound proceeds; nor, indeed, to say with certainty that it is within the house at all. But in whatever part you may be listening, it seems to come from some remoter corner. Thus, if you hear it, being in the drawing-room, at one extremity of the house, THE GHOST appears to come from the library at the other end; if you are in the library, it sounds as if proceeding from the drawing-room. At another time, it seems to come from underneath the stable-yard, or lawn, or in the cellar.

"Considerable pains have been taken, at different times, to ascertain whence the sounds proceed, with a hope of finding some sufficient cause of them; but entirely without success; and, after about twenty years, we are as entirely in the dark as ever. The length of time it has been heard, the fact of every domestic of the family having been often changed during the time, and the pains that have been taken to investigate the matter, while every member of the family, except the watcher, has been in bed, have put the possibility of any trick out of the question; and have no less convinced the inmates that it cannot be accounted for, on any of the usual suppositions, 'of horses in the stable kicking,' or 'dogs rapping with their tails,' or 'rats jumping in the tanks and drains beneath the house.' Horses stamp, and dogs rap, and rats gallop; but they do not

make such sounds as that one startling and peculiar noise with which our ears are so familiar.

"To convey a notion of the nature of THE GHOST, and of the force and violence with which it sometimes bursts out, I will describe the way it has repeatedly been heard, by different members of the family. On one occasion it burst forth with so much violence that the writer of this, accustomed as he was to hear and disregard it, sprang out of bed and ran to the landing at the head of the stairs, under a conviction that the outer door of the house had been burst in with violence. After a few moments the sounds ceased, and he retired to bed again; it was THE GHOST. On another occasion, when he was going up to bed, THE GHOST began to thump violently, in the direction of the brew-house; and continued so long that he had time to go to the back door of the house and sally forth in quest. On his arrival, nothing was to be heard or seen.

"On another occasion, the sound having for a considerable time appeared to come from a direction that suggested it to spring from some loose vessels in the brew-house, or from the cellar, which was close adjoining; the writer, with two of his brothers, sat up, one in the cellar, and the others in the brew-house. He in the cellar did not hear it. The two who had watched exactly where it had appeared to be for a good while before, heard it, loudly and distinctly as ever; but it sounded underneath the lawn, fifty yards away from where they were.

"About a month ago," says this correspondent of

Major Moor, "the owner of the house, and a friend who happened to be staying on a visit, occupied adjoining apartments. One morning, at the breakfast table, each demanded of the other an explanation of his movements on the previous night; each having been astonished at hearing, as he thought, his neighbour moving about and making a great noise among his books or the furniture of his apartment. 'I expected,' said one, 'to see you open my door and walk in.' 'I thought you must have been ill, and had almost gone in to see,' said the other. Each had been quiet in bed; and the sound was nothing but THE GHOST.

"The usual sound is that described as a succession of deep thumps; but other sounds, almost more curious and unaccountable, are often heard, of which I will relate a few particulars.

"Some time ago a gentleman, a relation of the family, was on a visit to Ewshott House. One morning, at the breakfast table, he related the following curious and unaccountable circumstance:—He had been awakened in the night by hearing, as he thought, a cart drawn along on the gravel road, immediately under his windows; it appeared to be heavy-laden, and rattled as if with a load of iron rods. Wondering what could be about at that hour of the night, he got up and opened his window to investigate; there was neither sight nor sound of anything to cause the noise. He got into bed again, and thought it possible he had been dreaming; but half an hour after, as he lay awake, he heard the very same again—the rattling of a loaded cart upon the

drive beneath his windows. 'Now,' thought our friend, 'I'll find the cause.' So up he got again, opened his windows, and looked out; but all was still. He went to bed again, and heard no more. He told the story in the morning, and inquired if anything had taken place to cause the sound he had heard; but nothing could be thought of to account for it, and he tells the story to this day.

"To this it may be well to add two other anecdotes of our nocturnal friend. Four or five years ago, the writer of this ghost story was in the habit of sitting up at night to a very late hour, reading in the library; and though the family are all much too familiar with our GHOST to be disturbed by any of his gambols, the sounds that used to strike his ears were often most remarkable and startling. On one occasion, in particular, it seemed as if a flock of sheep from the adjoining paddock had rushed by the windows on the gravel drive. It was not a windy night; and so convinced was he, after attentive listening, that it was the rapid rushing of a flock he heard, that he considered with himself the propriety of going out to drive them back again. But idleness prevailed: it was cold; he was busy; so he voted it THE GHOST, and sat still at his books. But when he came down in the morning, fully expecting to find marks of sheep and damage done, to his surprise there was no sign at all of any such invasion. The lawn was smooth, and the gravel was untrodden; and it was indeed THE GHOST.

"At another time it happened that when the whole

family were in one room, at prayers—not one member of the family absent but a young child in the nursery—a noise was heard, as of someone walking across the hall, next to the room in which they were assembled. The lady who was reading prayers rose from her knees directly, and went into the hall with the servants at her heels, before it was possible a person could have got away; but there was no one to be seen, nor anything to lead to the supposal of a visitor of any more substantial kind than our old friend THE GHOST.

"It should be mentioned here that there is, running underneath the house, a very large old drain, which has been thought to be connected with the sounds above described. A few years ago this drain was thoroughly examined, with a view to ascertaining whether some loose brick or timber might be lying on it, which might create such sounds on being trod upon by rats, etc. A man was sent up through it, from one end to the other; but nothing of the kind appeared. The whole was thoroughly and carefully cleared out, but the noise proceeded as ever. How long THE GHOST had been observed before the present family resided is not known, but the popular belief attaches all the unblest circumstances here related to the unquiet spirit of one Squire ——, a man of but indifferent repute, as it would seem, and one whose grave might not be found an easy resting-place. The old Squire has been dead three hundred years. He appears to have been the person who pulled down the old house and built up the present one in its stead."

Thus far Major Moor gave the words of his principal informant; but being anxious to obtain further testimony, he applied to several visitors at Ewshott House, and published the letters of three of them, all testifying to their personal experience of the phenomena. He published, also, a letter from his own nephew, Captain A. H. Frazer, R.A., which is as follows:—

"Carlisle, 19th July 1841.

"With regard to the HAUNTED HOUSE affair at Ewshott House, I will give as full and minute an account as I can. I wrote an account at the time, which has been unfortunately destroyed; but as the facts are well impressed on my memory, the loss of it is of less consequence.

"Soon after my intimacy with Lefroy began, he invited me to stay a few days at his mother's house in Hampshire. 'You must know,' he laughingly added, 'that ours is a haunted house, and has been so for many years. The inconvenience of this reputation has been very great, as, at times, we have had difficulty in getting servants to stay with us, especially maid-servants; and we have by common consent dropped all allusion to the subject, and I now mention it to you that you may not, during your visit, transgress this rule.'

"'About twenty years ago' (I think he said twenty), 'when we first came to Ewshott House, there was an old house adjoining it, in which a bailiff, who had charge of the estate, lived with his family. Very strange noises used to be heard after eleven o'clock almost every night, which we attributed at first to the people in the other house, and did not, in consequence,

pay so much attention to them as we afterwards did. But when the bailiff left this house (which we intended pulling down) we asked him why he had every night made such a noise? To our great surprise, he informed us that he was not the occasion of it; and we found, both from him and from other inquiries we set on foot, that the house had enjoyed the reputation of being haunted for many years. It appeared from some of the oldest inhabitants of the village in the parish, that Ewshott House had formerly been occupied by an eccentric and dubious character yclept Squire ——. This gentleman had, in his younger days, travelled much on the Continent, and had, amongst other countries, visited Italy, and brought home with him, on his return to England, an Italian valet—also a character. The two lived in seclusion at Ewshott House; and in process of time many reports and suspicions got abroad respecting them and the doings at the Hall; though nothing definite could be brought against Squire ——, except his being a great miser. At last he died, or disappeared' (I forget which Lefroy said), 'and shortly afterwards noises began to be heard in the house; and the common legend was, that he had been *bricked up* by his Italian servant, between the walls in some room or vault, and so left to perish; and that the noise was occasioned by his rapping the walls with the butt end of his hunting-whip in trying to get out.'

"Such was Lefroy's account. He added other particulars, which, as you have probably had them from some of the family in a more authentic form than I

could give, I omit. Now for my own part in the mystery. As I had never before been in a haunted house my curiosity was greatly excited; and I persuaded Lefroy to come up and sit up with me in my bed-room. He did so. The noise began much later than usual that evening—at least, we did not hear it till about half past twelve P.M. or a quarter before one A.M. It was as if someone was striking the walls with a hammer, or mallet, muffled in flannel. It began at first slowly, with a distinct interval between the blows, then became more rapid; but afterwards followed no rule, but was slow or rapid as caprice dictated. The noise did not appear to come always from the same part of the house. Sometimes it was heard faintly, as if at a distance; at others it became startlingly near, but seemed always *below* the room we were in. It was much louder than I expected. I think if I had been *outside* the house I should have heard it. I passed three other days at Ewshott House, and heard the same noise two nights out of the three. When all was still and asleep, there was something uncomfortable—not to say fearful—in hearing this hollow muffled noise, *moving* about the house, and coming at times so near that I expected to see the door open and some person come in, though no footsteps were ever heard. It usually began about eleven and half-past eleven P.M. But one evening I heard it a quarter before ten P.M., before any of the family had gone upstairs. The noise generally continued, with intervals, for about two hours; and I think there was a slight interval between every *five* blows, but

am not quite sure on this point. I never heard it during the day, though when every member of the family was out, and all was quiet, I would listen; nor did I ever hear it, except in one instance above named, before ten P.M.

"A slight interval between every *five* blows has been mentioned, but it is not mentioned that you should infer from this that there was any regularity in the striking of those five blows; on the contrary, the time was very uncertain and irregular. It was when the blows followed each other most rapidly that the noise was loudest. It was *only* at *first* that there was any regularity in the interval between the blows. I tried in vain to form a probable conjecture as to the cause of the noise"—after suggesting possible causes Capt. Frazer proceeds—"but the want of regularity in the sound, and its locomotive powers, render it improbable that any of these should be the real cause. And besides which *they* would all be heard in the daytime, if listened for; but the mysterious sound never has been, I believe.

"Although always much interested in anything partaking of the marvellous, I have no faith in superhuman agency in these matters. Still, it was impossible at night to hear this unaccountable sound without a slight feeling of depression, and I think it would have an (ill) effect upon a person of weak nerves or mind.

"Such is all I can recollect of what I *heard* myself, but the stories were numerous. One night, about twelve, the lady of the house was sitting in the drawing-room reading, all the family had retired to rest, when the

noise was heard close to a glass door (leading to another room) so loudly that she got up and went to the spot that it seemed to proceed from; but nothing, of course, was seen. There was a strange story connected with the room I slept in; it was told me by my friend Lefroy.

"Many years ago he came home for the holidays from school, and slept the first night there. About the middle of the night, he was awaked by a very loud noise, as if a cart, heavily laden with iron bars, was passing slowly along the path under the windows, which were in the front of the house, and looked towards the park. He threw open the shutters and window; it was a bright moonlight night; but he could see nothing, though the noise continued for a short time after. When he mentioned all this next morning he was laughed at for his pains. Some years after this, however (I think Lefroy said eleven), an uncle of his slept the first night of his arrival in this very room. When he came to breakfast next morning, in reply to hopes that he had slept well, &c., he said, 'It is a curious thing, but I was awaked by a cart, laden as if with iron, rattling under my windows; but it was so pitch dark I could not see anything.'

"One more observation about the mysterious sounds: there are some noises which, though very loud, the ear, from a long habit of judging of and weighing them, knows to be at a great distance; but this noise seemed to me (as a general rule) to become loud or faint, not so much from any change in the intensity of the blows.

as from a change of distance and position. And I am borne out in this remark by Lefroy, who mentioned that when several members of the family were stationed at different parts of the house, their accounts as to the loudness of the sound and its distance from them generally differed.

"I have now told you, in a somewhat lengthy style, all I can call to mind on the subject. I thought it better to put down facts as they occurred to me, and leave you, should you deem them suited to your purpose, to condense and arrange them as you pleased."

Thus ends Captain Frazer's account of this mysterious affair. Ewshott House, we are given to understood, is still inhabited; but whether still troubled by these unaccountable noises we are unable to learn.

GLAMIS CASTLE.

In the First Series of these stories and traditions some allusions were made to the mystery, or rather many mysteries, attached to Glamis Castle, the Forfarshire seat of the Earl of Strathmore. But the legends investing this immense and ancient palace are inexhaustible. In point of antiquity and historical interest the Castle is one of the most remarkable edifices in the kingdom. "Although dilapidated and dimmed in its original

splendour," writes Dr. Beattie, "its feudal air of strength and haughty defiance, and its sullen gloom of seclusion in an antique forest, is a subject peculiarly adapted for the pencil, and for exciting the imagination of the poet."

Glamis Castle, or rather some portions of the magnificent old edifice, is of immense antiquity; indeed, it claims to be the most ancient inhabited castle in Scotland; but it has undergone, save in the central tower, manifold repairings and rebuildings. The first legend which lends historic importance to the place is that Duncan was there murdered by Macbeth, "Thane of Glamis," even the very room in which the deed was done having been pointed out formerly, whilst in the armoury of the Castle the sword and the shirt of mail worn by Macbeth are still shown. Local tradition points to the Hunter's Hill, an eminence overlooking the Castle, as the spot where Malcolm the Second was attacked by the assassins.

The Glamis estates first came into possession of the Lyon family in 1371–2, when Sir John Lyon, feudal Baron of Fortevist, secretary and son-in-law to Robert the Second, received the grant of the lordship from that monarch. A long series of tragedies, we are informed, overgloomed the Lyons "from the moment they brought to Glamis their lion cup," the original of Scott's *Blessed Bear of Bradwardine*, and a kind of family palladium, like the *Luck of Edenhall*. Sir John Lyon, who was Great Chamberlain of Scotland, fell in a duel in 1383. His son, the grandson of King Robert the Second,

married his cousin, another grandchild of the same monarch, and, unlike many inheritors of the estate, died a natural death. His son was raised to the dignity of the peerage, in 1445, as Lord Glamis, and for some generations the Lyons lived and died in peace. The widow of the sixth Lord, Janet Douglas, a daughter of the Earl of Angus, together with her son Lord Glamis, and other relatives, was indicted for attempting the life of King James the Fifth by witchcraft. Lady Glamis was found guilty on evidence afterwards confessed to have been fabricated, and, horrible to relate, was burned to death on the Castle Hill, Edinburgh, in 1537. The son of this unfortunate lady, having been respited till of age, was, ultimately, released, and restored to his honours and estates. In 1578 John, eighth Lord Glamis, was slain in an accidental encounter with the Lindsays, the hereditary enemies of his race.

In the following century an earldom, first of Kinghorne, and then of Strathmore and Kinghorne, was conferred upon the ruler of Glamis. The grandson of the first Earl was slain at Sheriffmuir, in 1715, and his brother and successor, Charles, died on the 11th of May, 1728, "in consequence," say the peerages, "of an accidental wound received in a scuffle." According to the common story, however, his death was brought about in a duel over the gaming-table. One authority relates it thus, in *All the Year Round.*

"The old feud between Lindsays and Lyons had so far healed over that the members of the two families dined, and drank, and diced together, like fine

old Scottish gentlemen as they were. According to local tradition, the play one night at Glamis was very high, and when its owner had lost all his money, he staked his estates, one after the other, against the victorious player. At last Glamis itself was set on the turn of a card—and lost. Then the head of the house, maddened by his losses, accused his guest of cheating. The reply was a blow, swords were drawn, and after a few passes the victorious guest ran Lord Strathmore through the body, and thus sacrificed all his winnings." The Earl was really slain by James Carnegy, of Finhaven. Thus far the tradition is clear and comprehensible enough; but other legends put a very different complexion on it. There is a secret room in Glamis Castle, as everybody knows; a room no mortal eye may behold, and the locality of which is known only to the possessor of the Castle, his heir and his factor. This room is believed to have been the scene of a hideous gambling affair, and the hero of it was an Earl of Strathmore, said by William Howitt, in his account of Glamis, to have been "Earl Beardie," whose portrait is at Abbottsford. Whoever the nobleman was his name has been corrupted into that of "Earl Patie," by the Forfarshire peasantry, who, we are informed by Mr. Hugh Maclauchlan, tell the following story of his misdeeds.

"Many, many years ago, when gentlemen got regularly drunk at dinner-time, and had to be carried to bed by their servants, there reigned supreme at Glamis one Patie, known to fame as the wild Earl of Strath-

more. Earl Patie was notoriously good at all the vices, but his favourite vice was that of gambling. He would play Lord's Day or week day, whatever day it was; and if he could find no one else to humour him in his fancy, he would hob and nob with the humblest menial within the castle walls.

"It happened once, on a dark and stormy November night, that Earl Patie had been wearied by his forced inactivity from horse and hound—for it was the Lord's Day, and that means complete abstinence from all worldly pursuits in bonnie Scotland—and, at last, with oaths and curses, he called for a pack of cards, and comforted himself with the anticipation of a pleasant game. The ladies were at their devotions, so he called the servants to him, one by one; but never since the days of the feast in the New Testament were so many excuses invented to cover disinclination. Of all those who had humoured him so often, not one could be found, from the steward to the scullion, to take a hand with the wicked Earl. In desperation the chaplain was attacked; but he, too, proved temptation proof, and strengthened the rebellion among the menials by branding the pack of cards as 'deevil's bricks,' and hurling terrible anathemas at the head of any wight who should venture on so terrible a desecration of the Sabbath. For a time there was dire confusion and alarm in the Castle; and at last Earl Patie, swearing tremendously, and consigning everybody around him to an unmentionable locality, seized a pack of cards and went growling away up the old oak stairs to his chamber,

saying he would play with the 'deil himsel,' sooner than be thwarted in his desire.

"He had not sat long in the room before a knock came at the door, and a deep voice sounded from the corridor, asking the Earl if he wished a partner. 'Yes,' roared the Earl; 'enter, in the foul fiend's name, whoever you are.' And with that there entered a tall, dark stranger, wholly wrapped up in a cloak, who nodded in a familiar manner to the Earl, and took his seat on a vacant chair on the opposite side of the table. The Earl stared at his strange guest, and doubtless felt a momentary uneasiness as he remembered whom he had invited to play with him; but a look at the cards on the table reassured him, and they commenced the game in real earnest. The stranger, who did not remove his bonnet and cloak, proposed a high stake; and in reply the Earl said, if he were the loser, and had not wherewith to discharge his debt, he would sign a bond for whatever his guest might choose to ask. Fast and furious became the game, loud oaths resounded through the chamber, and the terrified menials crept up the corridor, wondering what brave man dared to bandy words with the wicked Earl, and who was sinful enough to hold his hand at the 'deevil's bricks' on the Lord's Day. As they fearfully listened they could hear the fierce utterances of the Earl, and the fiercer and more unearthly utterances of the stranger, whose presence they were quite unable to account for.

"At last the old butler, who had served the family for two generations, ventured close to the chamber-door

and peeped through the key-hole; but no sooner had he done so than he fell back and rolled on the floor with a yell of agony that resounded to the remotest part of the Castle. In an instant the door was rudely torn open and the Earl came out with fury in his face, and told them to slay anyone who passed, while he went back to settle with his guest. But his guest was nowhere to be found. They searched the chamber through and through, but in vain. He was gone, and he had taken with him Earl Patie's bond, but what for the confused and startled Earl did not exactly know. Returning by the old butler, Earl Patie found him stunned and bruised, with a yellow circle round the erring eye; and then he told the terror-stricken menials that, as he sat at play, the stranger suddenly threw down his cards and said, with an oath, 'Smite that eye!' whereupon a sheet of flame darted directly to the key-hole, and the mysterious stranger disappeared.

"Earl Patie lived five years before he paid his bond, but afterwards, on every Sabbath evening, the old chamber was filled with strange noises that echoed through the passages, as if the wicked Earl and the dark stranger were again wrangling and swearing over the 'deevil's bricks.' For a time the unearthly noises were put up with, but at last the room was built up, and nothing now remains to tell where the chamber was where Earl Patie and his fiery guest played their stormy game of cards." Such is the story, according to local tradition, of the secret room of Glamis Castle.

William Howitt's version of this tradition is, that the

famous "Earl Beardie," Earl of Crawford, of whom there is a portrait at Abbotsford, famous for his rebellion against James II. of Scotland, and popularly known as "the wicked laird," was playing at cards in the Castle, and, being warned to give over, as he was losing dreadfully, swore an oath that he would play till the Day of Judgment; whereupon the Devil suddenly made his appearance, and as sudden disappearance with old "Beardie" and all his company. The room has never been found again, but the people believe firmly that old "Beardie" and his company are playing on, and will play till the Day of Judgment; and that on stormy nights the players are heard stamping and swearing in their rage over their play.

But other, and deeper mysteries than that told of Earl Patie, or "Beardie," hover about that ancient and majestic castle. Those frowning towers, grey with age, and sombre with time, hold within their strong walls tales of almost unspeakable terror, and within their gloomy rooms, if rumour speak true, terrible tragedies have been enacted. Glamis, which a well-known traveller describes as one of the finest specimens of feudal architecture now existing, and as combining in a striking manner the gloom of prison security with the grandeur of a palace, is not so supremely interesting to outsiders for its magnitude or magnificence, its historical connexions or its melancholy associations, as for the seemingly impenetrable mystery that belongs to it. The local legend of Earl "Patie" or "Beardie" will not account for what has been seen and heard.

In 1880, a contributor to *All the Year Round*, whilst disclaiming all sympathy with ghost stories, or mysteries of any kind, and declaring himself to be "an utter sceptic as to all assumed supernatural manifestations," gave two strange incidents, as given to him on "good authority." The first narrative is told thus:—

"A lady, very well known in London society, an artistic and social celebrity, wealthy beyond all doubts of the future, and what is called a very cultivated and instructed, but clear-headed, and perhaps slightly matter-of-fact woman, went to stay at Glamis Castle for the first time. She was allotted very handsome apartments, just on the point of junction between the new buildings —perhaps a hundred or two hundred years old—and the very ancient part of the castle. The rooms were handsomely furnished; no gaunt carvings grinned from the walls; no grim tapestry swung to and fro, making strange figures look still stranger by the flickering firelight; all was smooth, cosy, and modern, and the guest retired to bed without a thought of the mysteries of Glamis.

"In the morning she appeared at the breakfast-table quite cheerful and self-possessed. To the inquiry how she had slept, she replied: 'Well, thanks, very well, up to four o'clock in the morning. But your Scottish carpenters seem to come to work very early. I suppose they put up their scaffolding quickly, though, for they are quiet now.' This speech produced a dead silence, and the speaker saw with astonishment that the faces of members of the family were very pale.

"She was asked, as she valued the friendship of all there, never to speak to them on that subject again; there had been no carpenters at Glamis Castle for months past. This fact, whatever it may be worth, is absolutely established, so far as the testimony of a single witness can establish anything. The lady was awakened by a loud knocking and hammering, as if somebody were putting up a scaffold, and the noise did not alarm her in the least. On the contrary, she took it for an accident, due to the presumed matutinal habits of the people. She knew, of course, that there were stories about Glamis, but had not the remotest idea that the hammering she had heard was connected with any story. She had regarded it simply as an annoyance, and was glad to get to sleep after an unrestful time; but had no notion of the noise being supernatural until informed of it at the breakfast-table.

"To what particular event in the stormy annals of the Lyon family the hammering is connected is quite unknown, except to members of the family, but there is no lack of legends, possible and impossible, to account for any sights or sounds in the magnificent old feudal edifice."

This same writer, after alluding to many of the tragic stories connected with Glamis, including the romantic episode of the renowned "Bowes" abduction case, proceeds to step into the dim borderland which separates tradition from fiction. "It is said," remarks this authority, "that once a visitor stayed at Glamis

Castle for a few days, and, sitting up late one moonlight night, saw a face appear at the window opposite to him. The owner of the face—it was very pale, with great sorrowful eyes—appeared to wish to attract attention; but vanished suddenly from the window, as if plucked suddenly away by superior strength. For a long while the horror-stricken guest gazed at the window, in the hope that the pale face and great sad eyes would appear again. Nothing was seen at the window, but presently horrible shrieks penetrated even the thick walls of the castle, and rent the night air. An hour later, a dark huddled figure, like that of an old decrepit woman, carrying something in a bundle, came into the waning moonlight, and presently vanished."

This writer hints at a very dreadful deed to explain the cause of the apparition, but, for some reason or the other, evades connecting the two tales by any intelligible method. He adds, however, that there is a more modern story of a stonemason, having been engaged at Glamis Castle on an important occasion, and having discovered, or been suspected of discovering, more than he should have done, was supplied with a handsome competency, upon the conditions that he emigrated, and preserved inviolable secrecy as to what he had learned. This writer continues:—

"The employment of a stonemason is explained by the conditions under which the mystery is revealed to successive heirs and factors. The abode of the dread secret is in a part of the castle, also haunted by the

apparition of a bearded man, who flits about at night, but without committing any other objectionable action. What connection, if any, the bearded spectre may have with the mystery is not even guessed. He hovers at night over the couches of children for an instant, and then vanishes. The secret itself abides in a room—a secret chamber—the very situation of which, beyond a general idea that it is in the most ancient part of the castle, is unknown. Where walls are fifteen feet thick it is not impossible to have a chamber so concealed, that none but the initiated can guess its position. It was once attempted by a madcap party of guests to discover the locality of the secret chamber, by hanging their towels out of window, and thus deciding in favour of any window from which no spotless banner waved; but this escapade, which is said to have been ill-received by those most interested, ended in nothing but a vague conclusion that the old square tower must be the spot sought.

"It seems to have been forgotten by these harum-scarum mystery-hunters that a secret chamber might well be like the curious places of concealment called 'priests' holes,' so common in old English country-houses, and the only mystery whereof is how the unfortunate hidden tenants could breathe in them.

"It is in the secret chamber of Glamis Castle that the mystery is revealed to the next heir, and to the new factor, when one is appointed; this much is known beyond all possible doubt. It is also assumed, from the stonemason story, and the mysterious sounds fre-

quently heard, that the secret chamber is approached by a passage duly closed with masonry after every visit.

"This latter conclusion may or may not be correct, but the existence of a mystery of some kind concealed within a secret chamber is fairly well made out."

No wonder that this writer asks, and many others repeat the question, "What is this mystery?" Of all the many attempted hypotheses not one may be deemed conclusive; but few probable, or even possible. It has been suggested, contrary to the proven facts [if proof were needed], that the beautiful and unfortunate Lady Glamis, the supposed witch, the victim of acknowledged perjury, who perished amid the flames on Castle Hill, at Edinburgh, "was actually in commerce with the Evil One, and that her familiar demon, an embodied and visible fiend, endures unto this day, shut from the light, in Glamis Castle!"

Another wild suggestion is, that owing to some hereditary curse, like those believed to rest on many well-known families, at certain intervals a kind of vampire is born into the family of the Strathmore Lyons. It is scarcely possible to destroy this monstrosity; it is, therefore, kept concealed till its term of life is run. But, it might be remembered, even monsters need nourishment, and this secret chamber at Glamis is only visited once in a generation. Other theories and suggestions are equally unfortunate, and no probable solution of the mystery has yet been given.

Thus far we have shown that strange sights and stranger sounds are reported upon good authority to

have been seen and heard at Glamis. Moreover, it may be assumed that there *is* a family secret, concealed within the depths of the old castle, and that the facts about it are never known to more than three persons. The three persons who have to hide within their bosoms this grim secret are the Earl of Strathmore for the time being, the heir-apparent, if he have attained his majority, and the "factor," or, as he might be termed in England, the house steward. On the night before he attains his twenty-first birthday, the heir, who bears the courtesy title of Lord Glamis, is solemnly initiated in the terrible mystery by the reigning Earl and his factor, and this secret he has to preserve until the majority of his own son, or, if he remain sonless, till the coming of age of his heir presumptive, and till the appointment of another factor to the property.

"Why the factor should be instructed in this terrible matter," says one of our authorities, "is a question which has excited, and continues to excite, the Caledonian mind to a remarkable degree. If the office of factor were hereditary, there would be an apparent reason for taking such an important functionary into the family confidence. But this is not the case in Scotland as a rule. In fact, the balance of experience is very greatly on the other side. The factor is sometimes a poor relation of a great house, but frequently a retired officer or a country gentleman unconnected with his employers by ties of blood. There is nothing in the occupation of a factor greatly in excess of that of an agent, saving that he is resident on the property instead of living in

the nearest large town. There is no reason why the connection between employer and factor should not be brought to an end at any time by individual or mutual dissatisfaction. There is, however, no record of any factor having disclosed any inkling of the Mystery of Glamis. As a Strathmore a Strathmore succeeds, there is generally much talk of the old story being exploded at last. Gay gallants in lace ruffles, beaus, bucks, bloods, and dandies have, until their twenty-first birthday, made light of the family mystery, and some have gone so far as to make after-dinner promises to 'hoist the old ghost with his own petard,' and tell the whole stupid old story in the smoking-room at night, after the coming of age humbug was all over. This promise has been made more than once. . . *But it has never been kept.* No heir to the Strathmore peerage has revealed the secret. On the morrow, when all looked for an explanation of the terrible mystery, they were met by a courteous but cold refusal; a simple statement that the fulfilment of the rash promise was impossible, a request to say no more about it, and thus the matter has ended," and so the Mystery of Glamis Castle remains a mystery still.

GUILDFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

At the conclusion of an entertaining paper entitled "A Winter's Night with my Old Books," the late Albert Smith gives a short account of an apparition which appeared at Guildford Grammar School; and it is

the more interesting from the fact that, having thrown discredit upon all the ghostly legends of the old writers, Lilly, Aubrey, Glanvil, and the rest, its writer adduces this as a story for which he can personally vouch. It originally appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany*, vol. xxv. p. 100, and was reprinted in "Dead Leaves," a posthumous publication of the well-known popular entertainer and author. It should be pointed out, however, that in this latter work, the initial of the youth who saw the spirit of the deceased huntsman is given as "Young M——," instead of as "Young K——," as given in the present narrative.

I mentioned, remarks Albert Smith, that I had a ghost story, hitherto unpublished, to tell of Guildford. "About ten years ago my brother was a pupil at the Grammar School in that town. The boys had been sitting up all night in their bed-room for a frolic, and, in the early morning, one of them, young K——, of Godalming, cried out, 'Why, I'll swear there's the likeness of our old huntsman on his grey horse going across the white-washed wall!' The rest of the boys told him he was a fool, and that all had better think about going to sleep. After breakfast a servant came over from K——'s family to say that 'their old huntsman had been thrown from his horse and killed, early that morning, whilst airing the hounds.'"

Albert Smith adds: "Leaving the reader to explain this strange story, which may be relied upon, I put my old books back on their shelves, and lay aside my pen."

HAMPTON COURT.

In the week's issue of *All the Year Round* for 22nd June 1867, was published a paper entitled "Is it Possible?" This communication is supposed to have been made by Dr. Phillimore. Whoever the author was, he refers to his mother as a daughter of "Sir G(eorge) P(rescott), of Theobald's Park, Herts," and in a note subjoined to the story by Dickens is alluded to as "the esteemed writer." The story is in every way so curious, so startling, and so strongly vouched for, that it should be given in the narrator's own words, which are to this effect.—

"Several years ago the brother of Colonel C—— was killed in battle, leaving a widow and one little girl. The widow subsequently married a German baron, and the little girl, Maud, was brought up entirely in Germany. The latter was about twelve years old when her mother, being attacked with an illness that threatened to prove fatal, became very uneasy about the probable future of her child; and feeling, one evening, more depressed than usual, called the little Maud to her bed-side, warned her that their parting was near, and enjoined the weeping girl to write immediately to Mrs. B—— (a friend of many years' standing), entreating her to come at once to receive her last embrace, and take charge of her orphan child.

"Maud obeyed without delay, but the dying woman's eyes were not gladdened by the appearance of her friend.

The summons had reached its destination, but the absence of her husband, without whom she felt unwilling to travel so far, had induced Mrs. B—— to postpone her departure, consoling herself with the hope that her friend, being naturally of a nervous and desponding temperament, had somewhat magnified her own danger.

"Mrs. B—— resided at Hampton Court, and here it was that, on the night of the 9th of November, a curious incident occurred. Retiring to her room between eleven and twelve, she rang for her maid, and, the latter not appearing as promptly as usual, went to her still open door to listen if she were coming. Opposite to her was a wide staircase, and up this came, noiselessly, a figure which the lamp held by Mrs. B—— showed to be that of a lady dressed in black, *with white gloves.* A singular tremor seized her. She could neither stir nor speak. Slowly the figure approached her, reached the landing, made a step forward, and seemed to cast itself on her neck; but no sensation accompanied the movement! The light fell from her hand; she uttered a shriek that alarmed the house, and fell senseless on the floor.

"On recovering, Mrs. B—— related minutely what she had seen, her memory especially retaining the image of the white gloves; but nothing more than the usual unsatisfactory solutions were propounded, nor does it appear that the occurrence was at all associated with the dying baroness in Germany.

"In a few days, however, came a letter from little

Maud, announcing that her mother was no more; that her latest thoughts were directed to Mrs. B——, and her sole regret was the not being permitted to embrace her before her spirit passed away. She had died a little before midnight on the *ninth of November*.

"Mrs. B—— hastened to Germany to claim her orphan charge, and then was added a noteworthy confirmation of the vision. Little Maud, in one of their conversations, observed, 'Mamma had a curious fancy. On the night she died, she made the baron promise that she should be buried in her black satin dress—with *white kid gloves*.' The request had been complied with."

HEATH OLD HALL.

THERE are three Halls at Heath, near Wakefield, but the one known as the Old Hall, at present occupied by Edward Green, Esquire, is that which bears the reputation of being haunted. It is a truly magnificent and palatial pile of buildings, and has been well described to us as one of the finest specimens remaining in Yorkshire of the Elizabethan period of architecture. The Hall was built for John Kaye of Dalton. The windows were formerly emblazoned with the arms of many of the chief nobility of England, but these have disappeared, such painted glass as there is there now having been brought over by some nuns, with whom, it

is said, was a Princess of Condé, who resided at the Hall during the Revolutionary troubles abroad.

Mr. John Batty, to whom we are indebted for much of the following information, says, the Kayes were succeeded in possession of the Old Hall by William Witham, Esquire. This owner died in 1593, and it is not improbable that some peculiar circumstances which attended his disease and death first obtained for the place its curious reputation. His illness, and its fatal termination, were ascribed to demoniacal agency, and a poor woman of the neighbourhood, named Mary Pannal, who lay under the suspicion of being a witch, was arrested, and executed for the supposed crime at York.

William Witham's son, Henry, dying without issue, Heath Old Hall became the property of his sister Mary, wife of Thomas Jobson of Cudworth, whose family had grown rich upon the plunder of abbey lands, another very potent reason for an uncanny fame being acquired by the race. Her first husband dying, Mary took for a second, Thomas Bolles, of Osberton, Nottinghamshire. Mary Bolles, whether for her loyalty or wealth is not stated, was created a baronetess of Scotland, with remainder to her heirs whatever, by James the First, in 1635, if not a solitary, still a very rare instance of such a title having been conferred. Lady Bolles lived in great state at the Old Hall, and, after much wealth and prosperity, died there in 1662, when eighty-three. Her interment did not take place until six weeks after her decease, she having assigned £120—a very much larger sum then than now—for keeping open house for all

comers during that time. Her will, only signed the day before her death, besides containing a number of charitable bequests, legacies to relatives and friends, and £200 for the erection of her tomb, further provides for the funeral festivities as follows: "I give all my fat beeves and fat sheep to be disposed of at the discretion of my executors, whom I charge to perform it nobly, and really to bestow this, my gift in good provision; two hogsheads of wine or more, as they shall see cause, and that several hogsheads of beer be taken care for (there being no convenience to brew). And, my bedding being plundered from me, I desire that the chambers may be well furnished with beds, borrowed for the time, for the entertaining of such as shall be thought fit lodgers." Besides these arrangements, Lady Bolles left £700 to be expended in mourning, and £400 for funeral expenses, and charged her executors most earnestly to see her will exactly performed, adding that if any person interested in it obstructed them in any degree, he or she should forfeit all claim to any benefit from it.

The Old Hall fell to the share of Sir William Dalston, in right of his wife Anne, daughter of Lady Bolles by her second husband, but, after changing hands more than once, passed by purchase to John Smyth, Esquire, of Heath, from whom it descended to Captain Smyth, of the Grenadier Guards, its present possessor.

The Hall and its environs, says Mr. John Batty, are beautifully described in "Emilia Monterio," a ballad by Mr. W. H. Leatham, on a young Portuguese lady who

lived with the nuns when they inhabited the Hall, some sixty years ago.

But the grand feature about this magnificent old Hall is that it is haunted, and by the apparition of Lady Bolles. Her ladyship is said *to walk* and disturb the neighbourhood; but her favourite resort is a fine banqueting-room, with a splendid carved stone chimney-piece, upon which are the Witham arms. Hunter, the Yorkshire antiquarian, deems that the lady's restlessness in the grave may probably be connected with the romantic circumstances surrounding her father's death; whilst others think it due to the non-observance by her executors of certain clauses in her will. According to this latter account, the lady long "walked" in Heath Grove, till at length she was conjured down into a hole of the river, near the Hall, called to this day "Bolles Pit." "The spell, however, was not so powerful but that she still rises and makes a fuss now and then." A tradition, however, exists in Heath that a room in the edifice which she had had walled up for a certain period, because large sums of money had been gambled away in it, was opened before the stipulated time expired, hence the restlessness of Lady Bolles.

At any rate, even now-a-days she is reported to be seen sometimes gliding along the passages of the house she once inhabited in the flesh, whilst servants in a neighbouring residence have refused to go out after dark, as they have repeatedly seen at dusk a tall woman dressed in antiquated style in the coach-road of Heath Old Hall.

One correspondent, as evidence of the general feeling of the neighbourhood about this time-honoured apparition, informs us that when at Ledsham some time since, he was looking over the tomb in the north chancel, beneath which Lady Bolles lies buried, when two little lads whispered to him, "Don't go there, maister, there's t'awd Lad!" (*Anglice*, the Devil.)

HINTON AMPNER MANOR HOUSE.

In the Life of the Rev. Richard Barham, author of *The Ingoldsby Legends*, by his son, the Rev. R. H. Dalton Barham, some extraordinary particulars are given respecting the haunting of Hinton Ampner Manor House, in Hampshire. Mr. Barham, who had recorded the story in his note-book for 1836, obtained the details from a Mrs. Hughes, who derived them originally from Mrs. Gwynn, a personal witness of the wonders referred to. The latter lady's account was subsequently confirmed by several persons, including the late Duchess of Buckingham, a resident in the neighbourhood.

"The story as told by Mrs. Hughes," says the Rev. Dalton Barham, "though substantially accurate as to incidents, contained some important errors in respect of the *dramatis personæ*. These were, I regret, reproduced in the second edition of my father's *Life*. I have now, however, thanks to the kindness of certain mem-

bers of the family mainly interested, the means of correcting them, and of presenting an authentic account of the Haunted House in Hampshire." Mr. Barham then proceeds to narrate the events connected with the presumed supernatural manifestations at Hinton Ampner, and his account we shall chiefly follow, correcting and amplifying it where necessary from the voluminous notes and affidavits cited in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for November and December 1872, to which periodical the whole affair was communicated under the title of "A Hampshire Ghost Story."

Mrs. Ricketts, the lady chiefly concerned with the following narrative, was a woman of aristocratic connections; her brother was the famous Admiral Jervis, afterwards Earl St. Vincent, and other members of her family held high positions in Church and State. Her husband, William Henry Ricketts, a Bencher of Gray's Inn, was a West Indian landowner; and it was during a somewhat lengthy visit which he paid to his estates in Jamaica that Mrs. Ricketts resided, with her three infant children and servants, in the old Manor House of Hinton Ampner, near Alresford, in Hampshire.

Previous to recounting particulars of the series of strange sights and sounds, the effect of which rendered Mrs. Ricketts' continued occupation of the old manor house an impossibility, it should be premised that that lady, according to all accounts, was a woman of remarkable vigour, both physical and mental. The coolness and courage with which Mrs. Ricketts endured for so long a period the disturbances at the old Hampshire

residence certainly speaks strongly in favour of her good sense, and her physical capacity may not inaptly be gauged by the fact that she preserved her intellectual powers unimpaired to the advanced age of ninety-one. Her second son, Edward Jervis, who succeeded his elder brother as Viscount St. Vincent, it may be mentioned, was ninety-two when he died. He is said to have "inherited the fine and powerful intellect of his mother."

The mansion of Hinton Ampner, where, in 1771, Mrs. Ricketts took up her residence, had for many generations been in possession of the Stewkeley family, and on the death of Sir Hugh Stewkeley, the last male heir, passed, by right of his wife, to Edward, Lord Stawell. On the evening of April 2nd, 1755, this nobleman, whilst sitting in the little parlour at Hinton, died suddenly of apoplexy, after having articulated a few words. For the next ten years the house, now become the property of the Right Hon. Henry Bilson Legge, husband of Lord Stawell's daughter, was left chiefly in the occupation of servants, Mr. Legge only visiting it for a month or so during the shooting season. At his death, in 1764, his widow let it to Mr. Ricketts.

For some time prior to the arrival of the new tenants the house seems to have been gradually acquiring an evil reputation; strange sounds were said to have been heard in it, and strange sights seen. In particular it was asserted that the figure of a gentleman in a drab-coloured coat, standing in the moonlight with his hands

behind him, after the manner of the late Lord Stawell, was seen by a groom, and recognised by him as that of his deceased master. These reports, however, do not seem to have reached the ears of either Mr. or Mrs. Ricketts, although they had not been long settled at Hinton before their attention was aroused by certain noises which they themselves heard in the night, as of persons opening and shutting doors with violence. Mr. Ricketts frequently went round the house in the hope of detecting the offenders; but, failing in his efforts to discover the cause of these disturbances, and supposing some ill-disposed persons possessed keys which gave them admission to the house, he had all the locks changed; but with no better result. The noises were repeated from time to time, yet, apparently, without causing any great annoyance to the family. Towards the close of 1769 Mr. Ricketts was called away to Jamaica, and his wife, who was not only a woman of remarkable vigour, both physical and mental, but whose good sense had acquired additional strength under the training of the learned Nicholas Tindal, determined to remain at home with her three infant children. There were also in the house eight servants, all of whom, it is to be observed, left it from various causes in the course of the following year, and were replaced by others. Soon after the departure of Mr. Ricketts the disturbances became more serious. The servants got frightened. Mrs. Ricketts herself, among other inexplicable sounds, frequently heard the rustling of silk clothes and the steps of someone walking in the adjoin-

ing room or lobby. On one occasion she plainly distinguished the tread of a man walking heavily towards the foot of her bed. Here it will be as well to furnish some extracts from the account drawn up by Mrs. Ricketts herself of the extraordinary affair.

"About six months after we came thither," is Mrs. Rickett's personal record, "Elizabeth Brelsford, nurse to our eldest son, Henry, then about eight months old, was sitting by him when asleep, in the room over the pantry, appropriated for the nursery, and, being a hot summer's evening, the door was open that faces the entrance into the yellow bed-chamber, which, with the adjoining dressing-room, was the apartment usually occupied by the lady of the house. She was sitting directly opposite to this door, and plainly saw, as she afterwards related, a gentleman in a drab-coloured suit of clothes go into the yellow room. She was in no way surprised at the time, but on the housemaid, Molly Newman, coming up with her supper, she asked what strange gentleman was come. Upon the other answering there was no one, she related what is already described, and desired her fellow-servant to accompany her to search the room; this they did immediately, without any appearance of what she had seen. She was much concerned and disturbed, and she was thoroughly assured she could no ways be deceived, the light being sufficient to distinguish any object clearly. In some time after it was mentioned to me. I treated it as the effect of fear or superstition, to which the lower class of people are so prone; and it was entirely obliterated from my

mind till the late astonishing disturbances brought to my recollection this and other previous circumstances.

"In the autumn of the same year George Turner, son of the gardener of that name, who was then groom, crossing the great hall to go to bed, saw at the other end a man in a drab-coloured coat, whom he concluded to be the butler, who wore such coloured clothes, he being lately come, and his livery not made. As he passed immediately upstairs to the room where all the men-servants lay, he was in great astonishment to find the butler and the other men-servants in bed. Thus the person he had seen in the hall remained unaccounted for, like the same person before described by the nurse; and George Turner, now living, avers these particulars in the same manner he first related them.

"In the month of July, 1767, about seven in the evening, there were sitting in the kitchen, Thomas Wheeler, postilion; Ann Hall, my own woman; Sarah, waiting-woman to Mrs. Mary Poyntz; and Dame Lacy; the other servants were out, excepting the cook, then employed in washing up her things in the scullery.

"The persons in the kitchen heard a woman come down-stairs, and along the passage leading towards them, whose clothes rustled as of the stiffest silk; and on their looking that way, the door standing open, a female figure rushed past, and out of the house door, as they conceived. Their view of her was imperfect; but they plainly distinguished a tall figure in dark-coloured clothes. Dame Brown, the cook, instantly coming in, this figure passed close by her, and instantly disap-

peared. She described the person and drapery as before mentioned, and they all united in astonishment who or what this appearance could be; and their surprise was heightened when a man, coming directly through the yard and into the house the way she went out, on being asked who the woman was he met, declared he had seen no one.

"Some time after Mr. Ricketts left me," continues the lady, "I, then lying in the bed-room over the kitchen, heard frequently the noise of someone walking in the room within, and the rustling as of silk clothes against the door that opened into my room, sometimes so loud and of such continuance as to break my rest. Instant search being often made, we never could discover any appearance of human or brute being.

"Repeatedly disturbed in the same manner, I made it my constant practice to search the room and closets within, and to secure the only door that led from that room on the inside in such manner as to be certain no one could gain entrance without passing through my own apartment, which was always made fast by a draw-bolt on the door. Yet this precaution did not preclude the disturbance, which continued with little interruption."

Mrs. Ricketts proceeds to furnish the names and various other particulars of the different domestics she had employed during her residence at the old Manor House, remarking:—

"I mention these changes among my domestics, though in themselves unimportant, to evince the impossibility of a confederacy, for the course of nearly

seven years, and with a succession of different persons, so that at the time of my leaving Hinton I had not one servant that lived with me at my first going thither, nor for some time afterwards.

"In the summer of 1770, one night that I was lying in the yellow bed-chamber (the same I have mentioned that the person in drab-coloured clothes was seen to enter), I had been in bed half an hour, thoroughly awake, and without the least terror or apprehension on my spirits. I plainly heard the footsteps of a man, with plodding step, walking towards the foot of my bed. I thought the danger too near to ring my bell for assistance, but sprang out of bed, and in an instant was in the nursery opposite; and with Hannah Streeter and a light I returned to search for what I had heard, but all in vain. There was a light burning in the dressing-room within, as usual, and there was no door or means of escape save at the one that opened to the nursery. This alarm perplexed me more than any preceding, being within my own room, the footsteps as distinct as ever I heard, myself perfectly awake and collected.

"I had, nevertheless, resolution to go to bed alone in the same room, and did not form any conclusion as to the cause of this very extraordinary disturbance. For some months afterwards I did not hear any noise that particularly struck my attention, till, in November of the same year, I then being removed to the chintz bedroom over the hall, as a warmer apartment, I once or twice heard sounds of harmony, and one night in particular I heard three distinct and violent knocks as given

with a club, or something very ponderous, against a door below stairs; it occurred to me that housebreakers must be forcing into some apartment, and I immediately rang my bell. No one hearing the summons, and the noise ceasing, I thought no further of it at that time. After this, and in the beginning of the year 1771, I was frequently sensible of a hollow murmuring that seemed to possess the whole house; it was independent of wind, being equally heard on the calmest nights, and it was a sound I had never been accustomed to hear.

"On the morning of the 27th February, when Elizabeth Godin came into my room, I inquired what weather. She replying in a very faint tone, I asked if she were ill. She said she was well, but had never in her life been so terrified as during the preceding night; that she had heard the most dismal groans and fluttering round her bed most part of the night, that she had got up to search the room and up the chimney, and though it was a bright moonlight she could not discover anything. I did not pay much attention to her account, but it occurred to me that should anyone tell her it was the room formerly occupied by Mrs. Parfait, the old house-keeper, she would be afraid to lie there again. Mrs. Parfait dying a few days before at Kilmston, was brought and interred in Hinton churchyard the evening of the night this disturbance happened.

"That very day five weeks, being the 2nd of April, I waked between 1 and 2 o'clock, as I found by my watch, which, with a rushlight, was on a table close to my bedside. I lay thoroughly awake for some time,

and then heard one or more persons walking to and fro in the lobby adjoining. I got out of bed and listened at the door for the space of twenty minutes, in which time I distinctly heard the walking, with the addition of a loud noise like pushing strongly against a door. Being thus assured my senses were not deceived I determined to ring my bell, to which I had before much reluctance on account of disturbing the nursery maid, who was very ill of a fever.

"Elizabeth Godin, during her illness, lay in the room with my sons, and came immediately on hearing my bell. Thoroughly convinced there were persons in the lobby, before I opened my door, I asked her if she saw no one there. On her replying in the negative, I went out to her, examined the window, which was shut, looked under the couch, the only furniture of concealment there; the chimney board was fastened, and, when removed, all was clear behind it. She found the door into the lobby shut, as it was every night. After this examination I stood in the middle of the room, pondering with much astonishment, when suddenly the door that opened into the little recess leading to the yellow apartment sounded as if played to and fro by a person standing behind it. This was more than I could bear unmoved. I ran into the nursery and rang the bell there that goes into the men's apartments. Robert Camis came to the door at the landing place, which door was every night secured, so that no person could get to that floor unless through the windows. Upon opening the door to Robert I told him the reason

I had to suppose that someone was entrenched behind the door I before mentioned, and, giving him a light and arming him with a billet of wood, myself and Elizabeth Godin waited the event. Upon opening the door there was not any being whatever, and the yellow apartment was locked, the key hanging up, and a great bolt drawn across the outside door, as usual when not in use. There was then no further retreat or hiding place. After dismissing Robert and securing the door, I went to bed in my sons' room, and about half an hour afterwards heard three distinct knocks, as described before; they seemed below, but I could not then or ever after ascertain the place. The next night I lay in my own room; I now and then heard noises and frequently the hollow murmur.

"On the 7th of May, exactly the day five weeks from the 2nd of April, this murmur was uncommonly loud. I could not sleep, apprehending it the prelude to some greater noise. I got up and went to the nursery, stayed there till half an hour past three, and then, being daybreak, I thought I should get some sleep in my own apartment; I returned and lay till ten minutes before four, and then the great hall door directly under me was slapped to with the utmost violence, so as to shake my room perceivably. I jumped out of bed to the window that commands the porch. There was a light to distinguish every object, but none to be seen that could account for what I had heard. Upon examining the door it was found fast locked and bolted as usual.

"From this time I determined to have my woman lie in a little bed in my room. The noises grew more frequent, and she was always sensible of the same sounds, and much in the same direction as they struck me. Harassed and perplexed, I was yet very unwilling to divulge my embarrassment. I had taken every method to investigate the cause, and could not discover the least appearance of trick; on the contrary, I became convinced it was beyond the power of any mortal agent to perform; but, knowing how exploded such opinions were, I kept them in my own bosom, and hoped my resolution would enable me to support whatever might befall.

"After Midsummer the noises became every night more intolerable. They began before I went to bed, and with intermissions were heard till after broad day in the morning. I could frequently distinguish inarticulate sounds, and usually a shrill female voice would begin, and then two others with deeper and manlike tone seemed to join in the discourse; yet, though this conversation sounded as if close to me, I never could distinguish words.

"I have often asked Elizabeth Godin if she heard any noise, and of what sort. She as often described the seeming conversation in the manner I have related, and other noises. One night in particular my bed-curtains rustled, and sounded as if dragged by a person walking against them. I then asked her if she heard any noise and of what kind. She spoke of it exactly in the manner I have done. Several times I heard sounds of

harmony within the room—no distinct or regular notes, but a vibration of harmonious tones; walking, talking, knocking, opening and slapping of doors were repeated every night. My brother,* who had not long before returned from the Mediterranean, had been to stay with me, yet so great was my reluctance to relate anything beyond the bounds of probability that I could not bring myself to disclose my embarrassed situation to the friend and brother who could most essentially serve and comfort me. The noises continuing in the same manner when he was with me, I wished to learn if he heard them, and one morning I carelessly said: 'I was afraid last night the servants would disturb you, and rang my bell to order them to bed.' He replied he had not heard them. The morning after he left me to return to Portsmouth, about 3 o'clock and daylight, Elizabeth Godin and myself both awake—she had been sitting up in bed looking round her, expecting, as she always did, to see something terrible—I heard with infinite astonishment the most loud, deep, tremendous noise, which seemed to rush and fall with infinite velocity and force on the lobby floor adjoining to my room. I started up, and called to Godin, 'Good God! did you hear that noise?' She made no reply; on repeating the question, she answered with a faltering voice, 'She was so frightened she scarce durst speak.' Just at that instant we heard a shrill and dreadful shriek, seeming to proceed from under the spot where the rushing noise fell, and repeated three or four times, growing fainter as it

* Captain John Jervis, afterwards Earl St. Vincent.

seemed to descend, till it sank into earth. Hannah Streeter, who lay in the room with my children, heard the same noises, and was so appalled she lay for two hours almost deprived of sense and motion.

"Having heard little of the noises preceding, and that little she did not regard, she had rashly expressed a wish to hear more of them, and from that night till she quitted the house there was scarce a night passed that she did not hear the sound as if some person walked towards her door, and pushed against it, as though attempting to force it open. This alarm, so more than commonly horrible, determined me to impart the whole series to my brother on his return to Hinton, expected in a week. The frequency of the noises, harassing to my rest, and getting up often at unreasonable hours, fixed a slow fever and deep cough, my health was much impaired, but my resolution firm. I remained in anxious expectation of my brother, and he being detained a week longer at Portsmouth than he had foreseen, it occurred to me to endeavour, by changing my apartment, to obtain a little rest. I removed to that formerly occupied by Elizabeth Godin. I did not mention my intention till 10 at night, when the room was prepared, and I went to bed soon after. I had scarce lain down when the same noises surrounded me that I before have related, and I mention the circumstance of changing my room without previous notice to prove the impossibility of a plan of operations being so suddenly conveyed to another part of the house, were they such as human agents could achieve. The week

following I was comforted by the arrival of my brother. However desirous to impart the narrative, yet I forbore till the next morning; I wished him to enjoy a night's rest, and therefore contented myself with preparing him to hear on the morrow the most astonishing tale that ever assailed his ears, and that he must summon all his trust of my veracity to meet my relation. He replied it was scarce possible for me to relate any matter he could not believe, little divining the nature of what I had to offer to his faith.

"The next morning I began my narrative, to which he attended with mixed surprise and wonder. Just as I had finished, Captain Luttrell, our neighbour at Kilmston, chancing to call, induced my brother to impart the whole to him, who in a very friendly manner offered to unite his endeavours to investigate the cause. It was then agreed he should come late in the evening, and divide the night watch between them, keeping profoundly secret there was any such intention. My brother took the precaution, accompanied by his own servant, John Bolton, to go into every apartment, particularly those on the first and attic story, examined every place of concealment, and saw each door fastened, save those to chambers occupied by the family. This done, he went to bed in the room over the servants' hall.

"Captain Luttrell and my brother's man, with arms, sat up in the chintz room adjoining, and my brother was to be called on any alarm.

"I lay that night in Elizabeth Godin's room, and

the children in the nurseries; thus every chamber on that floor was occupied. I bolted and locked the door that opened to that floor from the back stairs, so that there was no entrance unless through the room where Captain Luttrell kept watch.

"So soon as I lay down, I heard a rustling as of a person close to the door. I ordered Elizabeth Godin to sit up a while, and, if the noise continued, to go and acquaint Mr. Luttrell.

"She heard it, and instantly Mr. Luttrell's room door was thrown open, and we heard him speak.

"I must now give his account, as related to my brother and myself the next morning.

"He said he heard the footsteps of a person walking across the lobby, that he instantly threw the door open, and called, 'Who goes there?' That something flitted past him, when my brother directly called out, 'Look against my door.' He was awake, and heard what Mr. Luttrell had said, and also the continuance of the same noise till it reached his door. He arose and joined Mr. Luttrell. Both astonished, they heard various other noises, examined everywhere, found the staircase door fast secured as I had left it. I lay so near, and had never closed my eyes; no one could go to that door unheard. My brother and his man proceeded up-stairs, and found the servants in their own rooms, and all doors closed as they had seen just before. They sat up together, my brother and Mr. Luttrell, till break of day, when my brother returned to his own chamber. About that time, as I imagined, I

heard the chintz room door opened and slammed to with the utmost violence, and immediately that of the hall chamber opened and shut in the same manner. I mentioned to Godin my surprise that my brother, who was ever attentive not to alarm or disturb the children, should hazard both by such vehement noise. An hour after I heard the house door open and slam in the same way, so as to shake the house. No one person was then up, for, as I had never slept, I heard the servants rise and go down about half an hour afterwards. When we were assembled at breakfast, I observed the noise my brother had made with the doors.

"Mr. Luttrell replied, 'I assure you Jervis made not the least noise; it was your door and the next I heard opened and slapped in the way you describe.'

"My brother did not hear either. He afterwards acknowledged to me that when gone to bed, and Mr. Luttrell and I were sitting below, he heard dreadful groans and various noises that he was then and after unable to account for. His servant was at that time with mine below.

"Captain Luttrell declared the disturbances of the preceding night were of such a nature that the house was an unfit residence for any human being. My brother, though more guarded in his expressions, concurred in that opinion, and the result of our deliberations was to send an express to Mr. Sainsbury, Lady Hillsborough's steward, to request he would come over immediately on a very particular occasion, with which he would be made acquainted on his arrival.

"Unluckily, Mr. Sainsbury was confined with the gout, and sent over his clerk, a youth of fifteen, to whom we judged it useless and improper to divulge the circumstances.

"My brother sat up every night of the week he then passed at Hinton. In the middle of one of these nights I was surprised with the sound of a gun or pistol let off near me, immediately followed by groans, as of a person in agonies, or expiring, that seemed to proceed between my chamber and the next, the nursery. I sent Godin to Nurse Horner, to ask if she had heard any noise; she had not. Upon my inquiry the next morning of my brother, he had (not?) heard it, though the report and groans were loud and deep.

"Several instances occurred where very loud noises were heard by one or two persons, when those equally near and in the same direction were not sensible of the least impression.

"As the watching every night made it necessary for my brother to gain rest in the day, he usually lay down after dinner. During one of these times he was gone to rest, I had sent the children and their attendants out to walk, the dairymaid gone to milk, the cook in the scullery, my own woman with my brother's man sitting together in the servant's hall; I, reading in the parlour, heard my brother's bell ring with great quickness. I ran to his room, and he asked me if I had heard any noise; "because," said he, "as I was lying wide awake an immense weight seemed to fall through the ceiling to the floor just by that mahogany press, and

it is impossible I should be deceived.' His man was by this time come up, and said he was sitting underneath the room, as I before mentioned, and heard not the least noise. The inquiry and attention my brother devoted to investigate this affair was such as from the reach of his capacity and ardent spirit might be expected; the result was his earnest request that I would quit the place, and, when obliged to return to Portsmouth, that I would permit him to send Mr. Nichols, his Lieutenant of Marines, and an old friend of the family, to continue till my removal with me.

"One circumstance is of a nature so singularly striking that I cannot omit to relate it. In one of our evening's conversations on this wonderful train of disturbances I mentioned a very extraordinary effect I had frequently observed in a favourite cat that was usually in the parlour with me, and when sitting on table or chair with accustomed unconcern she would suddenly slink down as if struck with the greatest terror, conceal herself under my chair, and put her head close to my feet. In a short space of time she would come forth quite unconcerned. I had not long given him this account before it was verified to him in a striking manner. We neither, then, nor I at other times, perceived the least noise that could give alarm to the animal, nor did I ever perceive the like effect before these disturbances, nor afterwards, when she was removed with me to another habitation. The servants gave the same account of a spaniel that lived in the house, but to that, as I did not witness, I cannot testify."

Various causes, as Mr. Barham records, were assigned in the neighbourhood for these supernatural visitations. The most popular reason was that which connected the late Lord Stawell, "a notorious evil liver," with the manifestations. He had had in his employment as a bailiff a certain Isaac Mackrel, a man with a remarkably hoarse, guttural voice, and one who was declared to have been well, or rather ill known as a pander to his master's vices. Although Mackrel had been detected in robbing his master, he was retained in his service, having evidently some private hold upon him.

There had resided in the Manor House with Lord Stawell a younger sister of his deceased wife, and, it was rumoured, a guilty intrigue had been carried on between these two. Although no child was known positively to have been born, strong suspicions had been entertained on that score by the village gossips. The lady died at Hinton in 1754. In the year following Lord Stawell, as has been said, expired in a fit of apoplexy, and sometime after the steward was killed by the fall of a fagot-stack.

Mrs. Ricketts and her friends endeavoured to trace out the origin of these rumours, but without much success. One day, indeed, an old man living in the poor-house at West Meon came to her, and said that his wife had often related to him that, in her younger days, a carpenter had told her that he was once sent for by Sir Hugh Stewkeley, and directed by him to take up some boards in the lobby, and that Sir Hugh had concealed something, which he (the carpenter) conceived was

treasure. Some investigation appears to have been made in consequence of this communication, but nothing came of it.

Sixty pounds reward was offered by Lady Stawell for discovery of the cause of the disturbances, and this offer Mr. Ricketts, on his return to England, increased to one hundred, but no claim was ever made for the money.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Ricketts removed to Wolvesey, the palace of the Bishop of Winchester, with whom she was connected by marriage. After her removal the people left in charge complained of some annoyances, but the manifestations do not appear to have been so frequent nor so terrifying.

Eventually the Manor House was let to a Mr. Lawrence, who forbade the servants saying a word about the disturbances, under penalty of losing their places. Notwithstanding this judicious rule, rumours were still propagated, and it was stated that once, when the housemaid was standing in the lobby, a female figure rushed past and disappeared. Mr. Lawrence brought his family with him to Hinton, but, doubtless, the manifestations were too much for them; he only stayed in the house for a year, and then left it suddenly.

After this, the Manor House was never occupied. In 1797 it was pulled down, and under the floor of the lobby there was found a box containing bones and what was said to be the skull of a monkey. No regular inquiry was made into the matter, and no professional opinion was ever sought as to the real character of the relic.

The only person thought able to throw any light upon the mystery was an old woman who had been housekeeper in Lord Stawell's time: on her death-bed she expressed a desire to make a confession to a member of the Jervis family, but unfortunately she expired before the lady summoned could arrive.

It is declared that the subject was always a very sore one with the first Lord St. Vincent, and that any allusion to it commonly brought down a rebuke upon anyone who ventured to make it. "

INCE HALL.

INCE HALL, famous as being connected with one of the most curious beliefs in existence, is an ancient Lancashire dwelling. In Roby and Wilkinson's popular *Lancashire Legends* this old Hall is described as "one of those curious half-timbered mansions which are now becoming rare in this country. Its six sharply-pointed gables, and its long ranges of mullioned pointed windows, give it an imposing appearance from a distance; and on a nearer approach the remains of a moat are visible, which proves that it had once possessed means of defence. The estate connected with the Hall belonged to the Gerards for upwards of seven hundred years; the owners being descended from Walter Fitzothe, Castellan of Windsor, at the time when

Domesday Book was compiled." His son William adopted the surname of de Windsor, but another son, Gerard, was contented to bear his ordinary patronymic, and became the ancestor of the Gerards of Bryn, now represented by Sir Robert Gerard, of Garswood Hall.

About the year 1368, John, the third son of Sir Peter Gerard, of Bryn, married Ellen, daughter and sole heiress of Richard de Ince, the representative of a very ancient family, dating very nearly, if not quite, from the Conquest. In consequence of this marriage, the township of Ince passed to the Gerards, who, for many succeeding generations, resided at the old Hall.

The tradition connected with the building now known as Ince Hall, which mansion was not erected till the reign of James the First, is thus related in the *Lancashire Legends*: "There is a story of wrong attaching to Ince Hall, which has given rise to the legend of 'the Dead Hand.' One of its early possessors lay on his death-bed, and a lawyer was sent for at the last moment to make his will; but before he reached him the man was dead. In this dilemma it was determined to try the effect of a dead man's hand on the corpse, and the attorney's clerk was sent for one to Bryn Hall in all haste. The body of the dead man was rubbed with the holy hand, and it was asserted that he revived sufficiently to sign his will. After the funeral a daughter of the deceased produced a will which was not signed, leaving the property to his son and daughter; but the lawyer soon produced another will, signed by the dead hand, which conveyed all the property to himself. The

son quarrelled with the attorney, and after wounding him, as he supposed mortally, he left the country, and was never heard of more. The daughter also disappeared, but no one knew how or when. After many years the gardener turned up a skull in the garden with his spade, and the secret was revealed. When this took place the Hall had long been uninhabited; for the murdered daughter's ghost hung suspended in the air before the dishonest lawyer wherever he went. It is said that he spent the remainder of his days in Wigan, the victim of remorse and despair. There is a room in the Hall which is said to be haunted by the ghost of a young lady, and her shadowy form is frequently seen by the passers-by hovering over the spot where her remains were buried."

The Dead Hand.

The "Dead Hand," or the "Holy Hand," as it is sometimes styled, alluded to in the foregoing tradition, is the centre around which quite a galaxy of marvellous tales have gathered. It is known to have belonged to Father Edmund Arrowsmith, a Jesuit, who suffered the extreme penalty of the law at Lancaster, on the 28th August 1628.

The cause of Father Arrowsmith's trial and execution has been variously stated, certain sceptical persons alleging that he had been found guilty of some foul crime, and that the tale of his martyrdom for the sake of his faith, and the miracles which attest his sanctity, have been invented for the purpose of preventing scandal

in the Church. The *onus probandi* lies, of course, with them, and until these unbelievers in miraculous intervention can adduce any evidence on behalf of their allegations, there does not appear to be any reason for refusing to accept the testimony of the Catholics, which is to the following effect.

Arrowsmith was born at Haydock, in the parish of Winwick, Lancashire, in 1585. In 1605 he entered the Jesuit College at Douay, and in 1612 was ordained priest. The next year he was sent on a mission to England; and in 1623 was apprehended and taken to Lancaster on a charge of being a Romish priest, contrary to the laws "in that case made and provided." He was tried for this offence, found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed. After his body was cut down one of his friends or, as other accounts say, his spiritual attendant, cut off his right hand, in compliance with his dying injunctions, and to fulfil his dying promise that he should work miraculous cures on those who had faith in its efficacy.

For many years the hand was kept at Bryn Hall, and when that ancient edifice was demolished it was removed to Garswood Hall, Sir Robert Gerard's residence. Ultimately it was placed in the Catholic Chapel at Ashton-in-Maskerfield, where it now is in custody of the priest. This holy relic, by which so many marvellous cures have been wrought, is most carefully preserved in a white silk bag. We have before us an account of a case which occurred in August 1872: a woman named Catherine Collins, was sent to the Wigan Workhouse as

wholly destitute. She had been sitting all day on a door-step, after having come out of the workhouse at Salford on leave, and walked all the way from that town to Mackerfield, in order to have the "Holy Hand" applied to her side, which was paralyzed. When her case came before the Wigan Board of Guardians, Mr. Clarke, one of the guardians for Ashton, informed the Board that hundreds of persons visited the township on a similar errand to that of this paralytic woman.

JEDBURGH CASTLE.

EVEN the ruins of this ancient border-fortress have disappeared, and its site is, or was recently, occupied by a large prison. But time was in Scottish history that Jedburgh boasted of an important and even magnificent castle, that was the favourite residence of royalty. William the Lion and Alexander the Second often graced it with their regal presence, but it was left to Alexander the Third to still further enhance its glory and carry its splendour to its highest pitch. The childless monarch, having determined upon marrying again, ordered the wedding festival to be kept at Jedburgh, and there, in October 1285, he was united in marriage to Jolande, or, as some style her, Joleta, daughter of the Count of Dreux.

Notwithstanding the high character borne by King

Alexander, and the universal festivity and jollification, melancholy forebodings were not wanting on the occasion of this wedding. The hilarity, indeed, of the royal host and his guests was destroyed, or at all events overshadowed, by a circumstance by many deemed supernatural, and of which no explanation has ever yet been afforded. The occurrence appears to have given Edgar Poe a hint which he expanded into the tale, if such it may be termed, of *The Masque of the Red Death*. Whilst the wedding revelry was at its height, a figure was suddenly observed by the startled guests, gliding through their midst. In the poet's imaginative words, the figure is described as "tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat."

"'Who dares?'" he makes the royal host demand, 'insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him, that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise from the battlements!' . . .

"At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of the group of pale courtiers in the direction of the intruder . . . but, from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumption of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there was found none who put forth hand to seize him, so that . . . while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centre of the room to the walls, he made his way uninter-

ruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first." Ultimately, the revellers take courage, and, "seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless," they "gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave cerements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form!"

Less terrifying, yet not the less suggestive, are the lines of Heywood, *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels*, when recounting the ill-omened tale:—

> In the mid revels, the first ominous night
> Of their espousals, when the moon shone bright
> With lighted tapers—the King and Queen leading
> The curious measures, lords and ladies treading
> The self-same strains—the King looks back by chance,
> And spies a strange intruder fill the dance;
> Namely, a mere anatomy, quite bare;
> His naked limbs both without flesh and hair,
> (As we decipher Death), who stalks about,
> Keeping true measure till the dance be out.

Nothing further is known of this spectral appearance, which had glided so suddenly into the midst of the startled revellers, and had as suddenly and as mysteriously vanished. But everyone felt that it was the portent of some great approaching calamity. Thomas the Rymer, the famous seer and prophet, informed the Earl of March, in the presence of several persons, that the 16th of March should be "the stormiest day that ever was witnessed in Scotland." The day came clear and mild, and the scoffers laughed the prophecy to

scorn, when suddenly came the news that the King was dead. "That is the storm which I meant," said Thomas, "and there was never tempest which will bring more ill luck to Scotland." The seer was right.

Alexander the Third, riding in the dusk, between Burntisland and Kinghorn, was thrown from his horse over a precipice, and killed, in his forty-fifth year, a few months after his marriage. When the sad news spread, causing distraction among the people, and civil war between the claimants to the vacant throne, many thought of the dire omen which had appeared at the King's wedding, and deemed that it had been sent to betoken his speedy and premature death.

LONDON : BROOK STREET.

In a work by Mr. H. Spicer, entitled *Strange Things Among Us*, is related the story we are about to narrate, but with the names of all the persons and places suggested by initial letters only. After no little trouble, we have succeeded in identifying the names implied, and now give the tale in a completed condition. It is stated to have been communicated to the writer by a friend of Lady Clark, from whose own lips the story had been received:—

"One morning, some years since, the wife of a dis-

tinguished London physician was in bed, at her house in Brook Street. It was daylight, and she was broad awake. The door opened; but Lady Clark, concluding that it was her maid entering, did not raise her head, until a remarkable-looking figure, passing between her bed and the window, walked up to the fire-place, when, reflected in the mirror which hung above, Lady Clark recognized the features of her step-son, Dr. John Forbes Clark, then attached to a foreign embassy. He wore a long night-dress, and carried something on his arm.

"'Good Heavens! Is that *you*, John, and in that dress?' cried Lady Clark, in the first surprise.

"The figure turned slowly round, and she then became aware that the object he carried was a dead child, the body being swathed round and round in a large Indian scarf of remarkable workmanship, which Lady Clark had presented to Mrs. John Clark on the eve of her departure.

"As she gazed, the outlines of the figure became indistinct, invisible, vanishing in the grey light, or blending with the familiar objects in the room.

"Lady Clark neither fainted nor shrieked, nor even rang the bell. She lay back and thought the matter over, resolving to mention it to no one until the return of her husband, then absent in attendance on an illustrious household. His experience would decide whether her physical health offered any solution of the phenomenon. As for its being a dream, it may be taken as an accepted fact that, though nobody is con-

scious of the act of going to sleep, everybody knows by the sudden change of scenery, by the snapping of the chain of thought, and so forth, when he has been sleeping.

"Very shortly after, Sir James returned home. On hearing the story, he immediately looked at the tongue that related such wonders, and likewise felt the lady's pulse. Both organs perfect. Of her nerves he had seen proof. Touching veracity, she was truth itself. All his skill could devise nothing better than a recommendation to patience, and to see what came of it. In the meantime, the day and hour were noted down, and the next advices from T—— awaited with more than usual interest.

"At length they came. Dr. John Forbes Clark informed his father that their child, an only one, had died on such a day (that of the apparition), and that his wife, anxious that it should be laid to rest in the land of its birth, had begged that it might be forwarded by the next homeward ship. In due course it arrived, embalmed, but enclosed in a coffin so much larger than was required for the tiny occupant, that the intervening spaces had to be filled up with clothes, &c., while the Indian scarf had been wound, in many folds, around the child's body."

LONDON: THE HUMMUMS.

In the thirteenth chapter of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, will be found a sigular account of an apparition which appeared in Covent Garden, at a place called the "Old Hummums." The story is slight, but it is famous; and should, therefore, find a place in this collection. Some description of the place where the apparition appeared is necessary, in order to comprehend the full force of the impression which the account of its being seen there made upon the public mind.

In the south-east corner of Covent Garden market-place were quite recently two hotels known by the strange names of the "Old Hummums" and the "New Hummums." The name is said to be a corruption of the Turkish name "Hamam," a bath. These buildings were originally devoted to the use of what is now known as "the Turkish Bath," an institution introduced into England many years ago, the so-called "Turkish Bath" of the present day being only a revival of what was once very fashionable, but which, for a long time, had grown obsolete and been forgotten. These Hummums, however, when first established in London, seem to have been mostly frequented by characters of ill reputation, and became, as in the East, a favourite rendezvous for gossip. They speedily grew to be useful for the purposes of intrigue, and this circumstance gradually led to their suppression as baths. Both the Old Hummums and the New Hummums were changed into respectable hotels,

which character they have retained until their recent demolition, the original signification of their former titles being almost forgotten.

The "Old Hummums" was the scene of what the great Dr. Johnson pronounced "the best accredited ghost story that he had ever heard." The individual whose apparition was said to have appeared there was a Mr. Ford, a relation or connection of the learned doctor himself, and is said to have been the riotous parson of Hogarth's "Midnight Modern Conversation." Boswell, relating a conversation which took place at Mr. Thrale's house, at Streatham, between himself and Dr. Johnson, says:—

"Amongst the numerous prints pasted on the walls of the dining-room of Streatham was Hogarth's 'Modern Midnight Conversation.' I asked him what he knew of Parson Ford, who makes a conspicuous figure in the riotous group. Johnson said: 'Sir, he was my acquaintance and relation; my mother's nephew. He had purchased a living in the country, but not simoniacally. I never saw him but in the country. I have been told he was a man of great parts; very profligate, but I never heard he was impious.' Boswell asked, 'Was there not a story of his ghost having appeared?' Johnson said, 'Sir, it was believed. A waiter at the Hummums, in which house Ford died, had been absent for some time, and returned, not knowing that Ford was dead. Going down to the cellar, according to the story, he met him; going down again, he met him a second time. When he came up, he asked some of the people of

the house what Ford could be doing there. They told him Ford was dead. The waiter took a fever, in which he lay for some time. When he recovered he said he had a message to deliver to some women from Ford; but he was not to tell what, or to whom. He walked out; he was followed, but somewhere about St. Paul's they lost him. He came back, and said he had delivered the message, and the women exclaimed, "Then we are all undone!" Dr. Pellet, who was not a credulous man, inquired into the truth of this story, and he said the evidence was irresistible. My wife went to the Hummums (it is a place where people get themselves cupped). I believe she went with the intention to hear about this story of Ford. At first they were unwilling to tell her; but after they had talked to her she came away satisfied that it was true. To be sure the man had a fever, and this vision may have been the beginning of it. But if the message to the women, and their behaviour upon it, were true as related, there was something supernatural. That rests upon his word, and there it remains.'"

LONDON: SOUTHAMPTON FIELDS.

A VERY curious, but not an unparalleled, tradition is that referring to the so-called "Field of the Forty Footsteps." The story, as generally told, and as adapted by Jane and Anna Maria Potter, in their romance on

the subject, is that two brothers, having taken different sides in the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, met, and, having engaged each other in fight, were both killed. Where they fought was in a field at the back of the British Museum, at the extreme north-east of Upper Montague Street, formerly known as Southampton Fields. Where the steps of the two desperate men pressed the ground no grass, according to tradition, would ever grow, and for many years the impressions, said to have been forty, of their feet, remained bare and ungrown over.

Many other accounts of this popular tradition exist, however, and from them may be selected the following, the substance of which appeared in the *Arminian Magazine* for 1781. *The Brothers' Steps*, as they are styled, are stated to be discoverable in a field about the third of a mile northward from Montague House, now replaced by the British Museum. Their origin is, according to this version, due to the footprints of two brothers who quarrelled about a worthless woman, and fought out their quarrel at this place. "The prints of their feet," says this authority, "are about the depth of three inches, and nothing will vegetate, so much as to disfigure them. The number is only eighty-three" (*forty* may have been adopted for its alliterative sound), "but probably some at present are filled up. For I think there were formerly more in the centre, where each unhappy combatant wounded the other to death. And a bank on which the first fell retains the form of his agonizing couch by the curse of barrenness, while

grass flourishes all about it. Mr. George Hall, who was the librarian of Lincoln's Inn, first showed me those steps twenty-eight years ago, when, I think, they were not quite so deep as now. He remembered them about thirty years, and the man who first showed them him about thirty more, which goes back to the year 1692; but I suppose they originated in the reign of King Charles the Second.* My mother well remembered their being ploughed up, and corn sown to deface them, about fifty years ago. But all was labour in vain, for the prints returned, in a while, to their pristine form, as probably will those that are now filled up."

The above account of the *The Brothers' Footsteps* appeared so extraordinary to the Editor of the *Arminian Magazine* that, as he says, he did not know what to think of it. He knew his informant to be a person of good understanding and real piety, and yet "he testified what he had seen with his own eyes." To satisfy himself about the strange recital, the Editor determined to seek out more evidence, and he soon found it.

"A while ago," runs his narrative, "being at Mr. Cary's, in Copthall Buildings, I occasionally mentioned *The Brothers' Footsteps*, and asked the company if they had heard anything of them. 'Sir,' said Mr. Cary, 'sixteen years ago I saw and counted them myself.' Another added, 'And I saw them four years ago.' I could no longer doubt but they had been seen. And, a week or two after, I went with Mr. Cary and another person to seek them.

* The Duke of Monmouth's rebellion took place in 1685.—Ed.

"We sought for nearly half an hour in vain. We could find no steps at all within a quarter of a mile, no, nor half a mile, north of Montague House. We were almost out of hope, when an honest man, who was at work, directed us to the next ground, adjoining to a pond. There we found what we sought for, about three-quarters of a mile north of Montague House, and about five hundred yards east of Tottenham Court Road. The steps answer Mr. W——'s description. They are of the size of a large human foot, about three inches deep, and lie nearly from north-east to south-west. We counted only seventy-six; but we were not exact in counting. The place where one, or both, the brothers are supposed to have fallen is still bare of grass. The labourer showed us also the bank where (the tradition is) the wretched woman sat to see the combat."

LOSTOCK TOWER.

Lostock Tower, about four miles to the west of Bolton, is one of the numerous haunted homes of Lancashire. It figures in Roby's well-known *Lancashire Legends* as the locality of a cruel wrong, and proves that apparitions have more regard for moral than legal rights. The Tower was formerly an imposing structure, built chiefly of wood and plaster, and surrounded by a moat. The gateway, which occupies the site of a much more

ancient building, is now almost all that is left of the Anderton's old homestead. It is chiefly "built of brick and stone, interspersed with string courses and mouldings. The windows are very large, and are divided into compartments by strong mullions."

"Over one of the upper windows," writes Mr. Wilkinson, "there is a deep panel containing a coat of arms, now almost obliterated. On the front of the house there is the date 'A.D. 1591'; and a panel over the doorway, on which is the inscription 'S. F. A. 1702,' obviously marks the period when this portion of the Hall was either enlarged or repaired. This characteristic residence was not very judiciously situated, according to modern ideas. There is much low ground in the neighbourhood, which contains several rather picturesque sheets of water, and it is, besides, in the immediate vicinity of the boggy tract known as Red Moss. The river Croal rises from this marshy ground, which, after passing through Bolton, falls into the Irwell; the far-famed Douglas, also, has its origin in the same Moss, and, after flowing through Wigan, falls into the Ribble near Hesketh.

"Lostock Tower formerly belonged to the Andertons, but has since merged into the hands of the Blundells of Ince. There is a story of wrong connected with one of the early Andertons, which has passed into a tradition, and is even yet a source of heart-burning to a family named Heaton, resident in a neighbouring township of the same name. This tradition states that one of the Heatons was an improvident man, and wasted

much of his patrimony. He became deeply involved in debt, and mortgaged his township to Anderton of the Tower. The day for payment duly arrived, but the Heatons had not raised the money. The evening passed on, and at a somewhat early hour the Andertons retired to bed. They had not lain long before the Heatons were thundering at the doors; for they had raised the amount at the last moment, and were ready to pay. The owner of the Tower, however, coveted the property, and refused to let them in, because they ought to have been ready before the going down of the sun. On the morrow he said they were too late, and declared that the mortgage was foreclosed.

"The wrong done to the Heatons was never forgiven, for the family was utterly ruined; and it is stated that the soul of the wrongdoer is doomed to revisit the scene of his crime until the property is restored. It is also affirmed that no horse from the Tower, so long as it was occupied by an Anderton, could ever be forced to cross the stream into the manor of Heaton. Sir Francis Anderton took part in the Rebellion of 1745, and soon after lost his estates. In 1750 he was reported to be over sixty years of age, and childless; his property was held by the Crown under trustees, and eventually passed to the Blundells, he living in retirement until his death. This gentleman's fate is considered to be an act of retributive justice for the wrong done to the Heaton family by his ancestor of the Tower."

MONTGOMERY.

In 1852 the Rev. R. Mostyn Pryce published an account of certain circumstances of a singular character which had occurred in Montgomery. In the *Introduction* to his narrative, he refers to a solitary grave in a remote corner of the churchyard, known as "The Robber's Grave." It is not a raised mound, but is a bare space, level with the surrounding ground, and is of the shape and size of a coffin. The story connected with this grassless grave is to the following effect:—

At Chirbury, in the vicinity of Montgomery, was Oakfield, a house (that in better days had been a manor house) which, with the surrounding farm, was possessed by a widow named Morris. Her husband, a dissolute, indolent man, had left her and their only child, a daughter, in distressed circumstances, and, for some time, it was supposed that Mrs. Morris would have to part with the property, in which case it was to be let to a Thomas Pearce, to whose ancestors it had formerly belonged. Pearce had long waited and watched in hopes of one day becoming a tenant of the property his ancestors had squandered away; but just at the time when his expectations appeared to be on the point of realization, they were utterly frustrated. A young man styled "John Newton" in the story,* from Stafford-

His real name was John Davies.

shire, having been introduced to Mrs. Morris by her brother, was taken into her service as bailiff, and managed the farm for her with such assiduity and skill, that in a little while it became prosperous and flourishing, and all thoughts of resigning it to Pearce were relinquished.

Newton, to whose able management and industry this improvement was due, was an utter stranger to the neighbourhood. Nor did he appear willing to make any acquaintances beyond what business arrangements necessitated. He was obliged to attend the neighbouring fairs and markets, and he was a regular attendant at Chirbury Church; but he kept only his own company and his own counsel, even all the efforts of the clergyman of the parish failing to draw him out of his secluded habits and reserved manner. "He was, indeed," says Mr. Pryce, "for the most part, a melancholy grief-haunted man. Yet, in the pursuit of his occupations at Oakfield, he appeared contented and happy. His manner and behaviour towards the widow and her daughter were, at all times, marked with respect and even cheerfulness. He seemed to consider it a part of his duty to alleviate, by every means in his power, their cares and troubles, and to lighten their domestic solitude. Occasionally, when the day had closed upon his toils, he would read to them."

For more than two years this state of affairs lasted, and Mrs. Morris was by no means displeased to notice that her daughter's sentiments towards Newton were of a very friendly nature. "She watched with a mother's

anxiety and a mother's approbation," says our authority, "the growing affection of her child towards the stranger: for he was a stranger still. Studiously avoiding all reference to himself, his kindred, or his former life, he shrank sensitively from any allusion to the past, and felt grateful to them both when, with instinctive delicacy, they seemed content that his early history should remain unknown to them."

The stranger's skilful management of Oakfield, and the continually increasing interest which he appeared to obtain in its household, had excited anything but pleasurable feelings in more breasts than one. Thomas Pearce had naturally felt jealous with Newton, and was intensely disappointed "when baffled in his hopes of sheltering himself again beneath the roof-tree of his forefathers," yet he had apparently lived down his regrets. But Robert Parker, a young farmer and neighbour of Pearce, hated Newton with a still keener hate, for in him he beheld a successful rival for the affections of Jane Morris, of whom he had long been a fond but, as yet, unprofessed lover.

These two disappointed and vengeance-seeking men met frequently to discuss matters, and, at last, devised a plan for getting rid of the obnoxious stranger. Their proceedings are thus detailed by Mr. Pryce:—

"It was at length resolved to charge Newton with some offence which should banish him the country.

"An opportunity of accomplishing their purpose at length occurred. Newton had been attending a fair in the neighbourhood, and was detained on business till a

late hour. It was six o'clock on a dark November evening, when he left Welshpool to walk home. Parker, who had been stealthily watching his proceedings, followed, with Pearce, at a little distance. In a short time Newton was brought back to town by the two men, taken before a magistrate, charged with highway robbery, and committed."

The charge brought against him by the two confederates, men of known respectability, was that of "Highway robbery with violence;" a crime, at that time, punishable with death. The prisoner employed no counsel, asked the witnesses no questions, and merely protested his innocence of the charge.

He was pronounced "Guilty." When the judge asked him if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon him, he responded in a firm voice, that he forgave those men upon whose false testimony he had been convicted, "But, my Lord," he exclaimed, "I protest most solemnly, before that God in whose presence I must shortly appear, I am entirely guiltless of the crime for which I am about to suffer. . . . I do not say that I am an innocent man. I have committed a crime, but it is known only to my Creator and myself. I have endeavoured to atone for it by all the means in my power . . . and I humbly believe I have been forgiven. . . . I protest once more, I am entirely innocent of this charge. . . . It is my devout and earnest desire that the stain of this crime may not rest upon my name. . . . I have, therefore, in humble devotion, offered a prayer to heaven, and believe it has

been heard and accepted. . . . I venture to assert that *if I am innocent* of the crime for which I suffer, *the grass, for one generation, at least, will not cover my grave.*"

The unfortunate man was condemned and executed, and his remains were buried in Montgomery Churchyard. It was noticed that no sooner did the bell begin to toll for the execution than the sky became overcast; "no sooner had he placed his foot upon the scaffold than a fearful darkness spread around; and the moment the fatal bolt was withdrawn, the lightnings flashed with terrific vividness, the thunders rolled in awful majesty, until the town hill seemed shaken to its base; the rain poured down in torrents; the multitude dispersed horror-stricken and appalled, some crying out, 'The end of all things is come!'" This was in 1821.

Of the two witnesses against the unfortunate man, Parker became a dissolute drunkard and was killed at the blasting of some rocks in the lime-works in Llanymynech, whilst the other, Pearce, became dispirited and, as our informant remarks, "wasted away from the earth." Mrs. Morris and her daughter left Oakfield for ever.

Writing in 1852, Mr. Pryce says: "*Thirty years have passed away and the grass has not covered his grave!*" And again: "Numerous attempts have, from time to time, been made by some who are still alive, and others who have passed away, to bring grass upon that bare spot. Fresh soil has been frequently spread

upon it, and seeds of various kinds have been sown; but not a blade has ever been known to spring from them, and the soil has soon become a smooth, and cold, and stubborn clay."

In 1852, soon after Mr. Pryce's narrative had been written, "some sacrilegious hand" covered the grave with turf, and so tended it, that it grew all over it, save at the head, which remained bare, with the turf withered "as if blasted by the lightning's stroke." A month or so, and the grass again died away, leaving the grave once more bare!

The Rev. Fred. W. Parker, Rector of Montgomery, informs us that there is still a bare spot over the grave, which he has known for thirty-eight years, but that it is not so large as it has been in his memory. Mr. Parker has, also, kindly forwarded us a copy of a statement made some years ago by William Weeks, the then Parish Clerk, confirming some of the particulars above given, and stating that he made the grave (in 1821), and buried John Davies, and that "attempts have been made by different persons to cause the grass to grow on the grave by putting fresh soil and sowing seeds, &c., but hitherto without success. The grave has always returned, in a short time after each experiment, to the state in which it now is."

OKEHAMPTON.

In January 1884, Mr. James Spry sent an account to *The Western Antiquary*, of a supernatural being, popularly known as "Benjie Gear," which long troubled Okehampton and the neighbourhood with its pranks, and even now-a-days occasionally disturbs the good folks thereabouts. There is little in the legend connected with this apparition to distinguish it from many similar bits of folk-lore which crop up in most parts of England, but as a specimen of its class it is worth citation.

On the high gable end of an ancient house in Okehampton may be seen two gigantic iron letters, the initials of Benjamin Gayer, a former inhabitant. The house may readily be discovered, as it abuts on an irregular triangle formed by the houses behind the chantry. These initials, in italic capitals, are alluded to, in a local metrical version of the legend they commemorate, thus :—

Behind the chantry mote be yred,
The initial scroll of the burgher dead.
Stout of heart they esteem the wight
Who reads these letters at dead of night;
Though the moon be glinted back the while
From the oriel light of the chantry aisle:
Never pass but breathe a prayer
For the soul's best peace on Master Gayer,
Tædio vitæ quo confectus
Nunc ad æthera transvectus,
Socius fuit qui sanctorum,
Cœlu gaudeat angelorum!
Where life's troubled waters rest,
In the haven of the blest.

Mr. Spry suggests that the citizen thus commemorated may have been almoner of the money collected from the charitable of his time for the ransom of captives in Mohammedan lands, and that he may have appropriated such alms to his own use; hence his unsettled condition in the spirit world. His reason for this opinion would appear to be this extract "from a note on the history of Okehampton":—

"Mr. B. Gayer, with the philanthropy of a good burgess, as shown in his collections for the relief of poor Protestant prisoners in Turkey, would have been, but for these researches, a dead letter in the book of his little history: but tradition has preserved an ugly report of his own unquiet and imprisoned spirit. What child, or eke man or woman of our town, but has, some time or other, been terrified or amused at the story of Gayer the *revenant*?"

Notwithstanding the statement that this old citizen still haunts his native place, he is declared to have been *laid* some years ago. Mr. Spry's account is that Benjie Gear troubled the inhabitants of Okehampton to such an extent that "the aid of the Archdeacon was called in, and the clergy were assembled in order that the troubled spirit might be *laid* and cease to trouble them. There were twenty-three of the clergy who invoked him in various classic languages, but the insubordinate spirit refused to listen to their request. At length one, more learned than the rest, addressed him in Arabic, to which he was forced to succumb, saying, 'Now thou art come, I must be gone!' He

was then compelled to take the form of a colt; a new bridle and bit, which had never been used, were procured, with a rider, to whom the Sacrament was administered. The man was directed to ride the colt to Cranmere Pool on Dartmoor, the following instructions being given him. He was to prevent the colt from turning its head towards the town until they were out of the Park, and then make straight for the Pool, and when he got to the slope, to slip from the colt's back, pull the bridle off, and let him go. All this was dexterously performed, and the impetus thus gained by the animal with the intention of throwing the rider over its head into the Pool, accomplished its own fate."

As the citizens of Okehampton are still somewhat nervous on the score of meeting old "Benjie Gear's" apparition, the "laying," after all, was, probably, only temporary, or not so well carried out as it should have been.

PERTH.

A FREQUENT objection to ghostly visitants is that they trouble folks for no apparent purpose: they come and go, without seeming to accomplish anything more than the disarrangement of the spectator's nervous system. Such an objection cannot be raised against the follow-

ing curious account, related by the Earl of Shrewsbury to Dr. Binns, and published by the latter in his *Anatomy of Sleep*, with the remark that "perhaps there is not a better authenticated case on record." The apparently trivial nature of the spectral communication, so different from the deadly or important presage commonly accorded to the appearance of ghosts, only renders this case more noteworthy. The story was originally told to the Countess of Shrewsbury by the Rev. Charles McKay, a Catholic priest, in the following letter, dated Perth, October 21, 1842:—

"In July 1838 I left Edinburgh, to take charge of the Perthshire missions. On my arrival in Perth, the principal station, I was called upon by a Presbyterian woman (Anne Simpson by name), who for more than a week had been in the utmost anxiety to see a priest. On asking her what she wanted with me, she answered, 'Oh, Sir, I have been terribly troubled for several nights by a person appearing to me during the night.' 'Are you a Catholic, my good woman?' 'No, Sir; I am a Presbyterian.' 'Why, then, do you come to me? I am a Catholic priest.' 'But, Sir, *she* (meaning the person that had appeared to her) desired me to go to the priest, and I have been inquiring for a priest during the last week.' 'Why did she wish you to go to the priest?' 'She said she owed a sum of money, and the priest would pay it.' 'What was the sum of money she owed?' 'Three and tenpence, Sir.' 'To whom did she owe it?' 'I do not know, Sir.' 'Are you sure you have not been dreaming?' 'Oh, God forgive you!

for she appears to me every night. I can get no rest.' 'Did you know the woman you say appears to you?' 'I was poorly lodged, Sir, near the barracks, and I often saw and spoke to her as she went in and out to the barracks, and she called herself Maloy.'

"I made inquiry, and found that a woman of that name had died, who had acted as washerwoman and followed the regiment. Following up the inquiry, I found a grocer with whom she had dealt, and, on asking him if a person, a female, named Maloy, owed him anything, he turned up his books, and told me she did owe him *three and tenpence.* I paid the sum. The grocer knew nothing of her death, nor, indeed, of her character, but that she was attached to the barracks. Subsequently the Presbyterian woman came to me, saying that she was no more troubled."

PORTSMOUTH.

THE *Life of the Rev. R. H. Barham,* as these pages will show, contains more than one singular narration of the supernatural. One of the most popular is that related by Mrs. Hughes, of an apparition seen at Portsmouth; and although the exact house in that seaport is not mentioned by name, the story itself is so frequently alluded to, that, despite this want of authenticated locality, it should be included in our collection. It

was narrated to Mrs. Hughes by Mrs. Hastings, wife of Captain Hastings, R.N., and is to the following effect:

Captain and Mrs. Hastings were driving into Portsmouth one afternoon, when a Mr. Hamilton, who had recently been appointed to a situation in the dockyard there, made a third in their chaise, being on his way to take possession of his post. As the vehicle passed the end of one of the narrow lanes which abound in the town, the latter gentleman, who had for some little time been more grave and silent than usual, broke through the reserve which had drawn a remark from the lady, and gave the following reason for his taciturnity:

"It was," said he, "the recollection of the lane we have just passed, and of a very singular circumstance which occurred to me at a house in it some eighteen years ago, which occupied my thoughts at the moment, and which, as we are old friends, and I know you will not laugh at me, I will repeat to you.

"At the period alluded to, I had arrived in the town for the purpose of joining a ship in which I was about to proceed abroad. On inquiry, I found that the vessel had not come round from the Downs, but was expected every hour. The most unpleasant part of the business was, that two or three King's ships had just been paid off in the harbour, a county election was going on, and the town was filled with people waiting to occupy berths in an outward-bound fleet which a contrary wind had for some days prevented from sailing. This combination of events, of course, made Portsmouth very

full and very disagreeable. After wandering half over the town without success, I at length happened to inquire at a decent-looking public-house, situate in the lane alluded to, where a very civil, though a very cross-looking landlady at length made me happy by the intelligence that she would take me in, if I did not mind sleeping in a double-bedded room. I certainly did object to a fellow-lodger, and so I told her; but as I coupled the objection with an offer to pay handsomely for both beds, though I should occupy only one of them, our bargain was settled, and I took possession of my apartment.

"Having retired for the night, and having, as I thought, carefully locked the door to keep out intruders, I undressed, jumped beneath the clothes, and fell fast asleep.

"I had slept, I suppose, an hour or more, when I was awakened by a noise in the lane below. I was turning round to recompose myself, when I perceived, by the light of the moon which shone brightly into the room, that the bed opposite was occupied by a man, having the appearance of a sailor. He was only partially undressed, having his trousers on, and what appeared to be a belcher handkerchief tied round his head by way of a nightcap. His position was half sitting, half reclining on the outside of the bed, and he seemed to be fast asleep.

"I was, of course, very angry that the landlady should have broken her covenant with me, and at first felt half disposed to desire the intruder to withdraw;

but, as the man was quiet, and I had no particular wish to spend the rest of the night in an altercation, I thought it wiser to let things alone till the morning, when I determined to give my worthy hostess a good jobation for her want of faith. After watching him for some time, and seeing that my chum maintained the same posture, though he could not be aware that I was awake, I reclosed my eyes, and once more fell asleep.

"It was broad daylight when I awoke in the morning, and the sun was shining full in through the window. My slumbering friend apparently had never moved, and I had a fair opportunity of observing his features, which, though of a dark complexion, were not ill-favoured, and were set off by a pair of bushy black whiskers that would have done honour to a rabbi. What surprised me most, however, was that I could now plainly perceive that what I had taken in the moonlight for a red handkerchief on his forehead was in reality a white one, but quite saturated in parts with a crimson fluid, which trickled down his left cheek, and seemed to have run upon the pillow.

"At the moment the question occurred to me, how could the stranger have procured admission to the room? as I saw but one door, and that I felt confident I had locked, while I was quite positive my gentleman had not been in the chamber when I retired to bed.

"I got out and walked to the door, which was in the centre of one side of the room, nearly half-way between the two beds; and as I approached it, one of the

curtains interposed for a moment so as to conceal my unknown companion from my view. I found the door fastened, with the key in the lock, just as I had left it. Not a little surprised at the circumstance, I now walked across to the further bed to get an explanation from my comrade, when, to my astonishment, he was nowhere to be seen! Scarcely an instant before I had observed him stretched in the same position which he had all along maintained; and it was difficult to conceive how he had managed to make his exit so instantaneously, as it were, without my having perceived or heard him. I, in consequence, commenced a close examination of the wainscot near the head of the bed, having first satisfied myself that he was concealed neither under it nor by the curtain. No door nor aperture of any kind was to be discovered.

"I was the first person up in the house; a slipshod being, however, soon made its appearance, and began to place a few cinders, &c., in a grate not much cleaner than its own face and hands. From this individual I endeavoured to extract some information respecting my nocturnal visitor, but in vain; it 'knowed nothing of no sailors,' and I was compelled to postpone my inquiries till the appearance of the mistress, who descended in due time.

"After greeting her with all the civility I could muster, I proceeded to inquire for my bill, telling her that I certainly should not take breakfast, nor do anything more for the good of the house, after her breach of promise respecting the privacy of my sleeping-room. The good

lady met me at once with a 'Marry come up!' a faint flush came over her cheeks, her little grey eyes twinkled, and her whole countenance gained in animation what it lost in placidity.

"'What did I mean? I had bespoke the whole room, and I had had the whole room; and, though she said it, there was not a more comfortable room in all Portsmouth; she might have let the spare bed five times over, and had refused because of my fancy. Did I think to *bilk* her? and called myself a gentleman, she supposed!'

"I easily stopped the torrent of her eloquence by depositing a guinea (about a fourth more than her whole demand) upon the bar, and was glad to relinquish the offensive for the defensive. It was, therefore, with a most quaker-like mildness that I rejoined that certainly I had not to complain of any actual inconvenience from the vicinity of my fellow-lodger, but that, having agreed to pay double for the indulgence of my whim, if such she was pleased to call it, I, of course, expected the conditions to be observed on the other side; but I was now convinced that they had been violated without her privity, and that some of her people had doubtless introduced the man into the room, in ignorance, probably, of our understanding.

"'What man?' retorted she, briskly. 'There was nobody in your room, unless you let him in yourself; had you not the key, and did not I hear you lock the door after you?"

"That I admitted to be true. 'Nevertheless,' added

I, taking up my portmanteau and half turning to depart, 'there certainly was a man, a sailor, in my room last night; though I know no more how he got in or out than I do where he got his broken head or his unconscionable whiskers.'

"My foot was on the threshold as I ended, that I might escape the discharge of a reply which I foreboded would not be couched in the politest of terms. But it did not come; and, as I threw back a parting glance at my fair foe, I could not help being struck with the very different expression of her features from that which I had anticipated.

"I hesitated, and at length a single word, uttered distinctly but slowly, and as if breathlessly spoken, fell upon my ear; it was '*Whiskers*!'

"'Ay, *whiskers*,' I replied; 'I never saw so splendid a pair in my life.'

"'And a broken——! For Heaven's sake come back one moment,' said the lady; 'let me entreat you, Sir, to tell me, without disguise, who and what you saw in your bedroom last night.'

"'No one, madam,' was my answer, 'but the sailor of whose intrusion I before complained, and who, I presume, took refuge there from some drunken fray to sleep off the effects of his liquor; as, though evidently a good deal knocked about, he did not appear to be very sensible of his condition.'

"An earnest request to describe his person followed, which I did to the best of my recollection, dwelling particularly on the wounded temple and the remarkable

whiskers, which formed, as it were, a perfect fringe to his face.

"'Then, Lord have mercy upon me!' said the woman in accents of mingled terror and distress; 'it's all true, and the house is ruined for ever!'

"So singular a declaration only whetted my curiosity; and the landlady, who now seemed anxious to make a friend of me, soon satisfied my inquiries in a few words.

"After obtaining a promise of secrecy she informed me that, on the third evening previous to my arrival, a party of sailors were drinking in her house, when a quarrel ensued between them and some marines. The dispute at length rose to a great height. The landlady in vain endeavoured to interfere, till at length a heavy blow, struck with the edge of a pewter pot, lighting upon the temple of a stout young fellow of five-and-twenty, one of the most active of the sailors, brought him to the ground senseless and covered with blood. He never spoke again; but, although his friends immediately conveyed him upstairs and placed him on the bed, endeavouring to staunch the blood, and doing all in their power to save him, he breathed his last in a few minutes.

"In order to hush up the affair, the woman admitted that she had consented to the body being buried in the garden, where it was interred the same night by two of his comrades. The man having been just discharged, it was calculated that no inquiry after him was likely to take place.

"'But then, Sir,' cried the landlady, wringing her hands, 'it's all of no use!' Foul deeds will rise; and I shall never dare to put anybody into your room again, for there it was he was carried; they took off his jacket and waistcoat, and tied up his wound with a handkerchief, but they never could stop the bleeding till all was over; and, as sure as you are standing there a living man, he is come back to trouble us, for if he had been sitting to you for his picture you could not have painted him more accurately than you have done.'

"Startling as this hypothesis of the old woman was, I could substitute no better; and, as the prosecution of the inquiry must have necessarily operated to delay my voyage, without answering, as far as I could see, any good end, I walked quietly down to the Point, and, my ship arriving in the course of the afternoon, I went immediately on board, set sail the following morning for the Mediterranean, and have never again set foot in Portsmouth from that hour to this."

Thus ended Mr. Hamilton's narrative.

The next day the whole party set out to reconnoitre the present appearance of the house, but some difficulty was experienced in identifying it, the building having been converted into a greengrocer's shop about five years before. A dissenting chapel had been built on the site of the garden, but nothing was said by their informant of any skeleton having been found while digging for the foundation, nor did Mr. Hamilton think it advisable to push any inquiries on the subject.

Why Mr. Hamilton should not have deemed it advi-

sable to investigate the matter fully is difficult to divine. The house, however, would appear to have in some respects resembled one referred to by a Mr. Samwell in the following narrative, and was, probably, the same. In the year 1792, according to the account given, Mr. Samwell, a medical officer of the Royal Navy, was travelling from London to Portsmouth by the coach, in order to join the man-of-war to which he had been appointed. He was a man of some little literary and scientific attainment, and had published various works in both prose and verse. Among the former was a narrative of the death of Captain Cook, whom he had sailed with on his last voyage, and which was believed to be thoroughly accurate, as well as well-written. It was quoted verbatim by Dr. Kippis in his life of the celebrated circumnavigator. With such acquirements, remarks our informant, Mr. Samwell was not likely to harbour any notions bordering on the superstitious.

An accident which had befallen the coach near Lewes, in Sussex, caused a delay of several hours, insomuch that the passengers, on reaching Portsmouth, found the inns and other houses of entertainment shut. After wandering for a considerable time, Mr. Samwell perceived a light in an obscure quarter leading to Portsea, and, entering the house, inquired if he could repose there for the night. Being conducted to a bed-room, he was scarcely in bed, taken up with reflections about joining his ship in the morning, when he distinctly heard several taps at the door. Rising in his bed, he saw, at the bed-side, a figure of a tall man, wrapped in

a shaggy great-coat, and wearing a slouched hat, with a lantern in his hand. Not being able to procure any reply to the question he propounded as to the drift of this intrusion, Mr. Samwell sprang forward and made a grasp at the intruder, when, to his immense surprise, he only grasped the air!

The light suddenly disappeared; not a footstep was to be heard, and everything was wrapped in silence. From his bed he crept to the door, which was bolted inside, and alarmed the house.

On the arrival of the inmates, whom he was careful not to admit into the apartment, he provided himself with a light, and searched everywhere within, to discover, if possible, a trap-door by which the intruder might have silently escaped; but his search was without success.

The woman of the house, when he explained matters, treated his story as a dream, and solicited him to go to bed again; but, having dressed himself, he left the house, preferring to pass the night on the ramparts rather than endure any more such interruptions. In the morning he related what had happened to him to several persons, describing the house and its position; when he was told that a mystery was hanging about it, which Sir John Carter, the mayor, had for some time anxiously endeavoured to clear up. Not one, but several strangers, who had resorted thither, had, from time to time, unaccountably disappeared; and what seemed to prove how easily their bodies might have been disposed of after they had been robbed and murdered,

was shown from the fact that the back part of the house hung over a mud ditch, into which the bodies might have been cast without causing any alarm to the vicinity.

Mr. Samwell's loquacity does not, however, appear to have drawn forth any more definite information than did Mr. Hamilton's reticence.

ROSLIN CHAPEL.

SEVEN miles to the south of Edinburgh is the village of Roslin, celebrated for its chapel and castle. Roslin Chapel, about which traditions still flourish, is as much noted for its legendary lore as for its unique architectural beauty. The building is small, but is particularly rich in Gothic decorative stonework; its chief attraction, however, in that way being a very fine carved column known as the "Prentice's Pillar." This pillar, in marked contrast with the severe simplicity of the other columns, is wreathed about, from base to capital, with richly carved bands, and, according to tradition, was executed by an inspired apprentice.

This charming architectural gem, the ancient and romantic chapel of Roslin, was founded, in the year 1446, by William St. Clair, Prince of Orkney, Duke of Oldenburgh, and of enough other titles, as an old authority observes, even to weary a Spaniard. The original design for the chapel was never carried out, the

chancel only being completed, and the transept begun. About two centuries ago, the edifice was much defaced by a mob, and at one time was in danger of becoming quite ruinous, when, happily, General St. Clair had it repaired, and his successors have continued the work of preservation.

The family vault of the St. Clairs is beneath the pavement of the chapel, and there the barons were anciently buried in their armour, without any "useless coffin." A manuscript history, quoted by Sir Walter Scott, thus alludes to a family interment in the vault at Roslin:—"When my good father was buried, his (a long deceased Baron of Roslin) corpse seemed to be entire at the opening of the cave; but when they came to touch his body, it fell into dust. He was laying in his armour, with a red velvet cap on his head, on a flat stone; nothing was spoiled, except a piece of the white furring that went round the cap, and answered to the hinder part of the head. All his predecessors were buried after the same manner, in their armour; late Rosline, my good father, was the first that was buried in a coffin, against the sentiments of King James the Seventh, who was then in Scotland, and several other persons well versed in antiquity, to whom my mother would not hearken, thinking it beggarly to be buried after that manner."

But the weird and curious superstition which lends so much romantic interest to Roslin, and which has caused it to be a favourite theme for poets, is the belief that whenever any of the founder's descendants are

about to die the chapel appears to be on fire. Notwithstanding the fact that the last "Roslin," as he was called, died in 1778, and the estates passed into the possession of the Erskines, Earls of Rosslyn, the old tradition has not been extinguished. The manner and matter of the time-honoured legend are so well portrayed by Harold's song in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, that it had better be quoted from here:—

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire light,
And redder than the bright moon-beam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'T was seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from caverned Hawthornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie;
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seemed all on fire, within, around,
Deep sacristy and altars pale;
Shone every pillar, foliage bound,
And glimmered all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze when fate is nigh
The lordly line of Hugh St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle!
Each one that holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

SAMLESBURY HALL.

THE famous old Samlesbury Hall stands about half-way between Preston and Blackburn. It is placed in a broad plain, looking southwards towards the woody heights of Hoghton; eastwards towards the lofty ridges which run through Mellor and Billington to Pendle; Preston and the broad estuary of the Ribble occupy the western prospect, whilst northwards, Longridge, leading towards the heights of Bowland, fills the scene: "enclosing a landscape," remarks Mr. T. T. Wilkinson, "which for picturesque beauty and historic interest has few equals in the country."

Samlesbury is famed in occult lore as the place whence Grace Sowerbutts and other notorious witches came. They were tried for witchcraft early in the seventeenth century, but escaped the fate generally meted out in those days to supposed members of the sisterhood, because, notwithstanding the fact that some of them had confessed their guilt, they were acquitted as impostors. Whilst their neighbours, from Tendle, Demdike, Chaffox, &c., were condemned and hanged as genuine sorcerers, the Samlesbury witches were let off as counterfeits. The eerie reputation acquired by Samlesbury may have partially arisen in consequence of these alleged dealings in the black art by its weird daughters, but that the haunting of the old Hall arose from quite a different cause local tradition guarantees.

Harland's *Lancashire Legends* traces the history of

the famous old building back to the early part of the reign of Henry the Second, when Gospatric de Samlesbury was residing in an ancestral home occupying the site now covered by the present Hall. His dwelling was surrounded by rich pastures and was shut in by the primæval forests of oak from which the massive timbers were obtained out of which was formed the framework of the structure still standing. This magnificent building was erected during the reign of Edward the Third.

"The family pedigrees tell us," says Harland, "that Cicely de Salmesbury married John de Ewyas about the middle of the thirteenth century; but, dying without male heir, his daughter was united to Sir Gilbert de Southworth, and the property thus acquired remained in the possession of his family for upwards of three hundred and fifty years. It was then sold to the Braddylls, and ultimately passed into the hands of Joseph Harrison, Esq., of Galligreaves, Blackburn; whose eldest son, William Harrison, Esq., now resides at the Hall.

"After the disposal of the property by John Southworth, Esq., in 1677, the house was suffered to fall into decay. For many years it was occupied by a number of cottagers; it was afterwards converted into a farmhouse, and passed through various stages of degradation from neglect. Mr. Harrison, however, determined that this fine old structure should be no longer thus desecrated. With a wise and just appreciation he restored both the exterior and the interior of the house in

accordance with their original design; and under his hands the Old Hall at Samlesbury has become one of the most interesting and instructive mansions in the county.

"Sir John Southworth was the most distinguished personage of his race. He was high in military command during the early years of the reign of Elizabeth—he mustered three hundred men at Berwick; and served the office of Sheriff of Lancashire in 1562. His possessions included Southworth, Samlesbury, Mellor, besides lands in eighteen other townships; but he was illiterate, bigoted, and self-willed. His rigid devotion to the faith of his ancestors led him to speak rashly of the changes introduced into the national religion; he also acted unwisely in contravening the laws, for which he was ultimately cast into prison, and otherwise treated with much severity until his death in 1595.

"'Tradition states that during his later years one of his daughters had formed an acquaintance with the heir of a neighbouring knightly house. The attachment was mutual, and nothing was wanting to complete their happiness except the consent of the lady's father. Sir John was thereupon consulted; but the tale of their devoted attachment only served to increase his rage, and he dismissed the supplicants with the most bitter denunciations. 'No daughter of his should ever be united to the son of a family which had deserted its ancestral faith,' and he forbade the youth his presence for ever. Difficulty, however, only served to increase the ardour of the devoted lovers; and after many secret interviews among the wooded slopes of the Ribble, an

elopement was agreed upon, in the hope that time would bring her father's pardon. The day and place were unfortunately overheard by one of the lady's brothers, who was hiding in a thicket close by, and he determined to prevent what he considered to be his sister's disgrace.

"On the evening agreed upon both parties met at the hour appointed; and as the young knight moved away with his betrothed, her brother rushed from his hiding-place, and slew both him and two friends by whom he was accompanied. The bodies were secretly buried within the precincts of the domestic chapel at the Hall; and Lady Dorothy was sent abroad to a convent where she was kept under strict surveillance. Her mind at last gave way—the name of her murdered lover was ever on her lips, and she died a raving maniac. Some years ago three human skeletons were found near the walls of the Hall, and popular opinion has connected them with the tradition. The legend also states that on certain clear, still evenings, a lady in white can be seen passing along the gallery and the corridors, and then from the Hall into the grounds: that she then meets a handsome knight who receives her on his bended knees, and he then accompanies her along the walks. On arriving at a certain spot, most probably the lover's grave, both the phantoms stand still, and as they seem to utter soft wailings of despair, they embrace each other, and then their forms rise slowly from the earth and melt away into the clear blue of the surrounding sky."

SAMPFORD PEVERELL.

THE well-known "Sampford Peverell Ghost" is one of those notorious cases of continuous haunting with which local history in England is rife. Again and again has it been asserted that the whole matter has been found out, the fraud has been discovered, the perpetrators have confessed, and so forth; and yet, as in so many other cases, when these allegations have been investigated they have been found to be baseless, and the mystery remains as much a mystery as ever. As far as we have been enabled to learn, the Sampford Peverell Ghost has never been discovered to be the work of human agency.

The Rev. Caleb C. Colton, the well-known and unfortunate author of *Lacon*, decidedly gave a much wider notoriety, and more important character, to the manifestations about to be chronicled than they would otherwise have acquired, by the publication, in 1810, of his *Narrative of the Sampford Ghost*. From this scarce pamphlet, supplemented by some particulars in a subsequent work by the same author, and a few additional *data* from other sources, the following account is compiled.

The fact that so many of the circumstances connected with this curious case of supposed supernatural manifestation were vouched for by the Vicar of Kew and Petersham, at the time a resident in Sampford, as having taken place under his own personal observation, natu-

rally created considerable excitement, not only in the immediate neighbourhood, but, indeed, all over the country; and the fact that the affair differed in many respects from the ordinary accounts of haunted houses, as, for instance, in the manifestations taking place in the day as well as in the night, and in physical results following blows received from invisible agents, made it all the more marvellous and sensational.

The village of Sampford Peverell, where all these wonders came to pass, is about five miles from Tiverton, in the county of Devon; and the events to be recorded occurred in 1810 and the following years, in the house of a Mr. John Chaye. According to the accounts published by the Rev. C. C. Colton, some very unaccountable things had occasionally happened in this said house previous to the manifestations he makes special record of. An apprentice boy had been greatly terrified by the apparition of a woman, and had declared that he had heard some extraordinary sounds in the night; but little or no attention was paid to his statements. About April 1810, however, the inhabitants of the house were alarmed by terrific noises being heard in every apartment, even in the daytime. Upon anyone going up-stairs and stamping on the floor in any of the rooms, say five or six times, the sounds would be repeated instantly, but louder, and generally more in number, and the vibrations of the boards caused by these repeated sounds could be sensibly felt through the soles of one's boots, whilst dust was thrown up with such velocity, and in such quantity, as to affect the eyes.

At mid-day the cause of these effects would announce its approach by loud knockings in some apartment or other of the house, above or below, as the case might be. At times more than a dozen persons have witnessed these mid-day knockings at once. The noises would very often, and in repeated instances, follow the persons through any of the upper apartments, and faithfully answer the stamping of their feet wherever they went. If persons were in different rooms, and one stamped with his foot in one room, the sound was instantly repeated in the other. These phenomena continued day by day, almost incessantly, for about five weeks, when they gradually gave place to others still more curious and alarming.

There were two apartments in the house in which the females who slept in them were dreadfully beaten by invisible agency. Mr. Colton stated that he himself heard more than two hundred blows given in the course of a night, and he could compare them to nothing but a strong man striking with all his force, with a closed fist, on the bed. These blows left great soreness, and visible marks. Mr. Colton saw a swelling, at least as big as a turkey's egg, on the cheek of Ann Mills, who voluntarily made oath that she was alone in the bed when she received the blows from an invisible hand. Mrs. Dennis, and Mary Woodbury, also, both swore voluntarily before Mr. Colton, Mr. Sully, an exciseman, and Mr. Govett, a surgeon, that they were so beaten as to experience a peculiar kind of numbness, and were sore for many days after. Their shrieks while being

beaten were too terrible, it is averred, to have been counterfeited.

Mr. Chave, the occupier of the house, deposed that one night the two servants were so much agitated that they refused to sleep any longer in their apartment, and he therefore permitted them, in the dead of the night, to bring their bed and bed-clothes into the room where he and Mrs. Chave slept. After the light had been put out, and they had been quiet about half an hour, a large iron candlestick began to move rapidly about the room. Mr. Chave could hear no footsteps, but while in the act of attempting to ring the bell the candlestick was violently thrown at his head, which it narrowly missed.

Another night Mr. Searle, keeper of the county gaol, and a friend, kept watch, and they saw a sword, which they had placed near them on the foot of a bed, with a large folio Testament placed on it, thrown violently against the wall, seven feet away. Mr. Taylor deposed that, upon going into the room, in consequence of the shrieks of the women, he saw the sword, which had been previously lying on the floor, clearly suspended in the middle of the room with its point towards him. About a minute after it fell to the ground with a loud noise.

Ann Mills deposed on oath that one night, while striking a light, she received a very severe blow on the back, and the tinder-box was forcibly wrenched out of her hands and thrown into the centre of the room.

The Rev. C. C. Colton said that the names of the women who were thus afflicted were Mary Dennis senior, Mary Dennis junior, Martha Woodbury, Ann Mills,

Mrs. Pitts, and Sally Case. He himself had witnessed most of the phenomena recorded above, whilst the women were in bed. Mr. Colton was sure they never moved, and he administered an oath to them upon the subject next morning, in presence of several gentlemen, whose names he gave. He adds: "I have often heard the curtains of the bed violently agitated, accompanied with a loud and almost indescribable motion of the rings. These curtains, four in number, to prevent their motion, were often tied up, each in one large knot. Every curtain in that bed was agitated, and the knots thrown and whirled about with such rapidity that it would have been unpleasant to be within the sphere of their action. This lasted about two minutes, and concluded with a noise resembling the tearing of linen; Mr. Taylor and Mr. Chave, of Mere, being also witnesses. Upon examination, a rent was found across the grain of a strong new cotton curtain."

Also Mr. Colton heard, in the presence of other witnesses, footsteps walking by him and round him. He was, also, conscious of candles burning near him, but could see nothing. Mr. Quick heard IT come down-stairs like a man's foot in a slipper, and seem to pass through the wall. "I have been," he says, "in the act of opening a door which was already half open, when a violent rapping was produced on the opposite side of the same door; I paused a moment, and the rapping continued; I suddenly opened the door, with a candle in my hand, yet I can swear I could see nothing. I have been in one of the rooms that has a large modern window, when,

from the noises, knockings, blows on the bed, and rattling of the curtains, I did really begin to think the whole chamber was falling in. Mr. Taylor was sitting in the chair the whole time; the females were so terrified that large drops stood on their foreheads. When the act of beating has appeared, from the sound of the blows, near the foot of one bed, I have rushed to the spot, but it has been instantly heard near the head of the other bed."

Mr. Colton emphasised his own statement by a voluntary affidavit, which he made in the presence of Mr. B. Wood, Master-in-Chancery, Tiverton, in the course of which he declared that, after an attendance of six nights at Mr. Chave's house, during which time he had used every endeavour to discover the cause of these disturbances, and placed a seal with a crest to every door, cavity, &c., in the house through which any communication might be carried on, and having repeatedly sworn the domestics as to the truth of the phenomena, and their own ignorance of the means whereby they were produced, he was still utterly unable to account for the things which he had seen and heard.

Mr. Talley, the landlord of the house, whose interest it certainly was to rid his property of such visitations, when he brought it into the market for sale, pretended to have found out the whole mystery, and alleged that the noises were produced by a cooper with a broomstick and a bludgeon. This pretended exposure was not however, acknowledged by any of the parties who had made the previous statements. Nevertheless, it served

to draw down the vengeance of the populace of Tiverton on Mr. Chave, and he narrowly escaped with his life.

Two years afterwards, however, Mr. Colton published the following remarks upon the subject, in notes to *Hypocrisy, a Satire*:—"An affair is still going on in this neighbourhood, and known to the public by the title of the Sampford Ghost, which might puzzle the materialism of Hume, or the immaterialism of Berkeley. Here we have an invisible and incomprehensible agent producing visible and sensible effects. The real truth is that the slightest shadow of an explanation has not yet been given, and that there exist no good grounds even for suspecting anyone. The public were given to understand that the disturbances had ceased, whereas it is well known to all in this neighbourhood that they continue, with unabating influence, to this hour. We were told, by way of explanation, that the whole affair was a trick of the tenant, who wished to purchase the house cheap—the stale solution of all haunted houses. But such an idea never entered his thoughts, even if the present proprietors were able to sell the house; but it happens to be entailed. And at the very time when this was said, all the neighbourhood knew that Mr. Chave was unremitting in his exertions to procure another habitation in Sampford on any terms. And, to confirm this, these disturbances have at length obliged the whole family to make up their minds to quit the premises, at a very great loss and inconvenience. If these nocturnal and diurnal visitations are the effects of a plot, the agents are marvellously secret and indefatig-

able. It has been going on more than three years; and if it be the result of human machination, there must be more than sixty persons concerned in it. Now I cannot but think it rather strange, that a secret by which no one can possibly get anything, should be so well kept; particularly when I inform the public, what the newspapers would not, or could not, acquaint them with; namely, that a reward of two hundred and fifty pounds has been offered for anyone who can give such information as may lead to a discovery. Nearly two years have elapsed, and no claimant has appeared. I myself, who have been abused as the dupe at one time, and the promoter of this affair at another, was the first to come forward with one hundred pounds, and the late mayor of Tiverton has now an instrument in his hands empowering him to call on me for the payment of that sum to anyone who can explain the cause of the phenomena."

When the manifestations ceased, if they even have now, we cannot learn; but it certainly would appear to be the case that no sure and unqualified exposure of the affair has ever yet been given.

SKIPSEA CASTLE.

Skipsea, an out of the way Yorkshire village, on the sea-coast between Bridlington and Hornsea, is cele-

brated for one of the most enduring apparitions on record. "The White Lady of Skipsea," as this phantom is styled, has haunted the old castle, of which, now-a-days, little more than the foundations remain, ever since the days of William the Conqueror. This Skipsea ghost, whose local habitation no native of the place would venture near after nightfall, is described as haunting the Castle mound, and its vicinity, in the form of a beautiful young woman, of mournful aspect, attired in long white drapery. Occasionally she may be seen flitting about the intrenchments or slopes of the Castle mound, and at times, even in the daylight, she is seen wandering about the precincts of what was formerly her home. No ill effects are reported to follow the appearance of this apparition, whose story is detailed by Mr. F. Ross in his interesting "Yorkshire Legends and Traditions," now appearing in the *Leeds Mercury*, in these words:—

"The White Lady was the wife of Drogo de Bevere, a Flemish soldier of fortune, who took up arms under the banner of the Norman Duke William, in the army he assembled together for the conquest of England. He was a good and valiant soldier, and fought with great bravery at the battle of Hastings, for which he was rewarded by Duke William, when he had subdued Northumbria, with a grant of the district of Holderness, which he constituted a Seigniory, and made Drogo the first Lord, who went to reside there, and erected a castle at Skipsea, as a defence against the Danes, who were wont to land at Flamborough, and to serve as his *caput baronium*, where he

exercised a semi-regal rule over the district. Although a brave warrior, he was tyrannical and oppressive to the Angles and Danes of Holderness, whose lands had been reft from them in his behoof, and whom he reduced to complete serfdom. He was subject to ungovernable bursts of passion, and, when in this mood, would perpetrate the grossest acts of cruelty and injustice. He was also exceedingly covetous and avaricious, as was evidenced by his seizure, by forcible means, of the lands in Holderness belonging to St. John's Church, at Beverley, which had been specially confirmed to the Canons, by King William; but these he was compelled to disgorge.

"As a further proof of his favour the Conqueror gave him one of his nieces in marriage, whose identity has not been clearly ascertained, but who, possibly, from the obscurity in which she is enveloped, may have been a grand-daughter of William's mother, Herteva, by her second marriage. However this may be, they were married, and he carried her down to his Yorkshire domain, where they resided together in Skipsea Castle. The marriage does not appear to have been a happy one; their tempers were incompatible. He was brutal in his tastes and manners, delighting only in war, the chase, and tyrannising over his menials and tenants; she, gentle and refined, as were the Norman ladies of the period. He always treated her with churlishness, often with savage barbarity, frequently threatened her with death, and, at length, in a fit of fierce passion, caused her to be poisoned.

"The deed was no sooner perpetrated than Drogo perceived his folly, feeling assured that her uncle would take vengeance upon him for it, and that the result would be a confiscation of the Seigniory, and his execution as a murderer. His craft and subtlety, however, served him well in this crisis. His victim was scarcely cold when he mounted the fleetest horse in his stable and rode southwards, bating neither whip nor spur until he reached the Court of the King. He represented to the latter that he was very desirous of taking his wife across sea to Flanders, to show her the land of his birth, and introduce her to his family. The King applauded the idea, and granted his permission for them to leave England, upon which Drogo represented that the domain which had been given him was of so poor a nature that it would grow nothing but oats, and that a great portion of it consisted but of woodland and morass, so that he was utterly destitute of the means of taking shipping to cross the sea. 'If that be all,' said the King, 'you shall not be baulked of your pleasure trip, for want of money,' and he gave him an order on his exchequer for a sum sufficient for the purpose. As soon as he got the money he took leave of the King, hastened to the sea-side, and set sail for Flanders. He had not been long gone, when a messenger arrived from Skipsea, who informed the King of the death of his niece and the manner of it. Upon receipt of this intelligence the King sent a body of horsemen after the murderer, with instructions to bring him back, alive or dead. But Drogo had got too much start, and eluded the pursuit,

arriving in due course in Flanders, but what was his after fate records tell not.

"We have no account of the place of burial of the unfortunate lady. There was no church at Skipsea at the time of the Domesday survey, but we find that Stephen, Earle of Albemarle, Lord of the Seigniory in the time of Rufus, gave his church of the Castle of Skipsea to the Monastery of Albemarle, and it is probable that within its walls her body was deposited. Her spirit, however, seems not to have found a resting-place, but for the past eight hundred years has been wandering about the scene of her unhappy wifehood. The phantom has not appeared in recent years, but in the *Hull Advertiser*, early in the present century, we have an account of the apparition having been seen. The editor prefaces the account by saying—'In introducing the following singular article, it may be necessary to state that the writer as well as the two persons upon whose testimony the circumstances rest, are well known to us, and above all suspicion of having thus related anything save what they believed to be strictly correct.'

"The writer states that he was visiting a lady in Holderness, when the conversation of the party then assembled turned upon supernatural appearances, the lady expressing the opinion that they 'were owing to some misapprehension of the senses,' upon which a gentleman of the party, of unimpeachable character, said that he was under the necessity of differing from the lady. 'For,' said he, 'about ten years ago I was

travelling on horseback one afternoon from Bridlington to Hornsea, and just as I was descending the brow of a hill, on the south of Skipsea, I observed a woman, apparently young, dressed in white, walking a little before me on my left hand, between the hedge and the road. Supposing that she had been visiting at a house on the top of the hill, I turned my head to see if there were any persons in attendance at the door, but the door was shut and none to be seen. My curiosity being now greater than before to know who this genteel person was, I followed her at the distance of twenty or thirty yards down the hill, which was 100 or 150 yards long, and expected when she got to the bottom, where there was a small brook, that I should meet her in attempting to gain the carriage bridge, but to my great astonishment, when she approached the brook, instead of turning to the right to gain the bridge, she vanished from my sight, at the very time that my eyes were fixed upon her. As soon as I got home, I related the strange affair to my family; and as it was light, and I had not previously been thinking about apparitions, nor was I ever in the habit of speculating on such subjects, I am firmly persuaded that what I saw was one.'

"The lady of the house said that the recital had made 'a greater impression on her than anything she had ever heard before.' 'For,' continued she, 'about five years ago I had a servant, who was a young man of good character and of a bold, active disposition, one who professed a disregard for any extraordinary appearances. In the month of November, about Martinmas

time, he requested leave to go to Bridlington and also to be accommodated with a horse, which was granted him. Being very desirous to make a long holiday of it, he rose early in the morning and set off two hours before daybreak; but, to our very great surprise, returned home early in the afternoon, before it was dark. On being questioned if anything was the matter with him, he replied that he had been so much alarmed that he was resolved never to travel alone in the dark if he could avoid it. 'For, as I was cantering along Skipsea-lane in the morning, bending forward with my face downwards, the horse suddenly bolted from the road to such a distance that I was very nearly dismounted. On recovering myself and looking about to discover what had frightened my horse, I saw a fine lady, dressed in white, with something like a black veil over her head, standing close by. How I got to Skipsea I cannot tell, but I was so frightened that I durst go no farther, but walked up and down the hill till it was light, when I found some persons going the same road, whom I accompanied to Bridlington.'"

SMITHILLS HALL.

SMITHILLS HALL, Halliwell, Lancashire, the seat of Richard Henry Ainsworth, Esq., is one of those lovely and picturesque ancestral abodes for which England is

famous. It is replete with the subdued charms which only antiquity can generate, and which no amount of expenditure, however lavish, can create. The origin of this splendid old mansion is lost in the proverbial "mist of ages"; historians retrace its story to the time of the so-called Saxon "Heptarchy," and, as if in confirmation of this remote ancestry, an ancient gateway bears the date of 680. Less mythical records of the place and its various owners are carried back to the early part of the fourteenth century, when the Lord of the Manor of Smithills was a William Radcliffe. Subsequently, an heiress by marriage carried this manor and the estates into the Barton family, and from that family it passed by purchase, in 1801, into the possession of the Ainsworths, by whom it is still held.

In a description of this ancient mansion, recently given in the *Bolton Journal*, it is said: "Smithills Hall requires to be sought for. It lies far from the road, which curves in its course, thus effectually hiding it from the public gaze. . . . When reached, the full beauty of the building is not at once seen. But passing through an arched gateway the south front is disclosed to view. Emerging by the gateway with the '680' inscribed above it, the visitor finds himself in the antique court-yard, at the head of a beautiful lawn, reached by a flight of steps. Turning from the view before us to admire the architecture and appearance of the old building, one is impressed with the air of calm repose which seems to rest over all. The old Lancashire lath-and-plaster style of building is everywhere apparent.

Black beams placed obliquely on a ground of dazzling whiteness, with ornamentations of quatrefoil standing out in charming relief, present a pleasing picture of the taste of our ancestors in matters architectural. The ivy clusters lovingly over porch and walls, the effect on the '680' gateway being especially lovely. The old-fashioned domestic chapel forms a wing to the east of the block, and around this, too, clusters the loving parasite, the healthy hue of green blending charmingly with the stained windows, rich in design, and commemorative of the heraldry of past and present of Smithills."

The writer then proceeds to speak of the interior of this fine old place, of its rich wainscottings, its oaken mouldings, and of its other relics of the past, but then recurs, as must all who mention Smithills Hall, to the mysterious footprint, to the far-famed BLOODY FOOTSTEP seen on the stone in the passage leading to the chapel. Above this indelible footstep is a plate bearing the inscription, "Footprint of the Reverend George Marsh, of Deane, martyr, who was examined at Smithills, and burnt at Chester, in the reign of Queen Mary."

The legend connected with this marvellous relic of the past is thus given in the local journal:—Robert Barton, at one time owner of Smithills, was "the famous magistrate before whom George Marsh, the Martyr of Deane, appeared in 1555, to answer for his Protestant faith. Tradition described Mr. Barton as a zealous bigot, and alleges rude treatment on his part

towards the martyr. It was after the examination before this worthy that, it is stated, Marsh, descending the stairs leading from the court-room, stamped his foot on the stones, and 'looking up to heaven, appealed to God for the justness of his cause; and prayed that there might in that place remain a constant memorial of the wickedness and injustice of his enemies,' the print of a man's foot remaining to the present day as such 'constant memorial.'"

A tradition in the place, a resident of Smithills Hall informs us, says the stone bearing the imprint of the mysterious footprint was once removed and cast into a neighbouring wood, but ghostly noises became so troublesome in consequence that the stone had to be restored to its original position.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, the famous American novelist, at one time enjoyed the hospitality of Smithills Hall. The legend of the "Bloody Footstep" made an intense and lasting impression upon his mind, and in three separate instances he founded fictions upon it. He saw the "Bloody Footstep," as he says himself, with his own eyes, and from the lips of his hostess heard the particulars of its origin. Either from what he heard, or imagined, about this weird symbol of a bygone crime, he gave in his romance of *Septimius* the following story as that of the Bloody Footstep:—

"On the threshold of one of the doors of Smithills Hall there is a bloody footstep impressed into the door-step, and ruddy as if the bloody foot had just trodden there; and it is averred that, on a certain night of the

year, and at a certain hour of the night, if you go and look at the door-step you will see the mark wet with fresh blood. Some have pretended to say that this appearance of blood was but dew; but can dew redden a cambric handkerchief? Will it crimson the finger-tips when you touch it? And that is what the bloody footstep will surely do when the appointed night and hour come round. . . .

"It is needless to tell you all the strange stories that have survived to this day about the old Hall, and how it is believed that the master of it, owing to his ancient science, has still a sort of residence there and control of the place, and how in one of the chambers there is still his antique table, and his chair, and some rude old instruments and machinery, and a book, and everything in readiness, just as if he might still come back to finish some experiment. . . . One of the chief things to which the old lord applied himself was to discover the means of prolonging his own life, so that its duration should be indefinite, if not infinite; and such was his science that he was believed to have attained this magnificent and awful purpose. . . .

"The object of the lord of Smithills Hall was to take a life from the course of Nature, and Nature did not choose to be defrauded; so that, great as was the power of this scientific man over her, she would not consent that he should escape the necessity of dying at his proper time, except upon condition of sacrificing some other life for his; and this was to be done once for every thirty years that he chose to live, thirty years

being the account of a generation of man; and if in any way, in that time, this lord could be the death of a human being, that satisfied the requisition, and he might live on. . . .

"There was but one human being whom he cared for—that was a beautiful kinswoman, an orphan, whom his father had brought up, and dying, left to his care. . . . He saw that she, if anyone, was to be the person whom the sacrifice demanded, and that he might kill twenty others without effect, but if he took the life of this one it would make the charm strong and good. . . . He did slay this pure young girl; he took her into the wood near the house, an old wood that is standing yet, with some of its magnificent oaks, and there he plunged a dagger into her heart. . . .

"He buried her in the wood, and returned to the house; and, as it happened, he had set his right foot in her blood, and his shoe was wet in it, and by some miraculous fate it left a track all along the wood-path, and into the house, and on the stone steps of the threshold, and up into his chamber. The servants saw it the next day, and wondered, and whispered, and missed the fair young girl, and looked askance at their lord's right foot, and turned pale, all of them. . . .

"Next, the legend says, that Sir Forrester was struck with horror at what he had done . . . and fled from his old Hall, and was gone full many a day. But all the while he was gone there was the mark of a bloody footstep impressed upon the stone door-step of the Hall. . . . The legend says that wherever Sir Forrester went,

in his wanderings about the world, he left a bloody track behind him. . . . Once he went to the King's Court, and, there being a track up to the very throne, the King frowned upon him, so that he never came there any more. Nobody could tell how it happened; his foot was not seen to bleed, only there was the bloody track behind him. . . .

"At last this unfortunate lord deemed it best to go back to his own Hall, where, living among faithful old servants born in the family, he could hush the matter up better than elsewhere. . . . So home he came, and there he saw the bloody track on the door-step, and dolefully went into the Hall, and up the stairs, an old servant ushering him into his chamber, and half a dozen others following behind, gazing, shuddering, pointing with quivering fingers, looking horror-stricken in one another's pale faces. . . .

"By-and-by he vanished from the old Hall, but not by death; for, from generation to generation, they say that a bloody track is seen around that house, and sometimes it is traced up into the chambers, so fresh that you see he must have passed a short time before."

"And this is the legend," says Hawthorne, "of the Bloody Footstep, which I myself have seen at the Hall door."

It will be seen, however, how widely different is the story told by the great American romancist from that given by the owner of Smithills Hall, and believed in by the tenants around. Whether the author of *Septi-*

mius really had any traditional authority for his version, or whether he evolved the whole recital from the depth of his imagination, it would be difficult to say.

SOUTER FELL.

HARRIET MARTINEAU, in her description of *The English Lakes*, writes: "The ascent of Saddleback may begin behind Threlkeld, up a path which the villagers will point out; but an easier way is to diverge from the main road some way farther on, by the road to Hesket, near the village of Scales. The hill-side path is to be taken which leads along Souter Fell, by the side of the stream which descends from Scales Tarn.

"This part is the very home of superstition and romance. This Souter or Soutra Fell is the mountain on which ghosts appeared in myriads, at intervals during ten years of the last century; presenting the same appearances to twenty-six chosen witnesses, and to all the inhabitants of all the cottages within view of the mountain, and for a space of two hours and a half at one time—the spectral show being closed by darkness! The mountain, be it remembered, is full of precipices, which defy all marching of bodies of men; and the north and west sides present a sheer perpendicular of 900 feet.

"On Midsummer-eve, 1735, a farm servant of Mr.

Lancaster, half a mile from the mountain, saw the eastern side of its summit covered with troops, which pursued their onward march for an hour. They came, in distinct bodies, from an eminence on the north end, and disappeared in a niche in the summit. When the poor fellow told his tale, he was insulted on all hands; as original observers usually are when they see anything wonderful. Two years after, also on a Midsummer-eve, Mr. Lancaster saw some men there, apparently following their horses, as if they had returned from hunting. He thought nothing of this; but he happened to look up again ten minutes after, and saw the figures, now mounted, and followed by an interminable array of troops, five abreast, marching from the eminence and over the cleft as before. All the family saw this, and the manœuvres of the force, as each company was kept in order by a mounted officer, who galloped this way and that. As the shades of twilight came on, the discipline appeared to relax, and the troops intermingled, and rode at unequal paces, till all was lost in darkness. Now, of course all the Lancasters were insulted, as their servant had been; but their justification was not long delayed.

"On the Midsummer-eve of the fearful 1745, twenty-six persons, expressly summoned by the family, saw all that had been seen before, and more. Carriages were now interspersed with the troops; and everybody knew that no carriages had been, or could be, on the summit of Souter Fell. The multitude was beyond imagination; for the troops filled a space of half a mile, and marched

quickly till night hid them—still marching. There was nothing vaporous or indistinct about the appearance of these spectres. So real did they seem, that some of the people went up, the next morning, to look for the hoof-marks of the horses; and awful it was to them to find not one foot-print on heather or grass. The witnesses attested the whole story on oath before a magistrate; and fearful were the expectations held by the whole country-side about the coming events of the Scotch rebellion.

"It now came out that two other persons had seen something of the sort in the interval—viz. in 1743—but had concealed it, to escape the insults to which their neighbours were subjected. Mr. Wren, of Wilton Hall, and his farm-servant, saw, one summer evening, a man and a dog on the mountain, pursuing some horses along a place so steep that a horse could hardly by any possibility keep a footing on it. Their speed was prodigious, and their disappearance at the south end of the fell so rapid, that Mr. Wren and the servant went up, the next morning, to find the body of the man who must have been killed. Of man, horse, or dog, they found not a trace; and they came down and held their tongues. When they did speak, they fared not much the better for having twenty-six sworn comrades in their disgrace.

"As for the explanation, the editor of the *Lonsdale Magazine* declared (vol. ii., p. 313) that it was discovered that on the Midsummer-eve of 1745 the rebels were 'exercising on the western coast of Scotland,

whose movements had been reflected by some transparent vapour, similar to the Fata Morgana.' This is not much in the way of explanation; but it is, as far as we know, all that can be had at present. These facts, however, brought out a good many more; as the spectral march of the same kind seen in Leicestershire in 1707; and the tradition of the tramp of armies over Helvellyn, on the eve of the battle of Marston Moor."

We have allowed Harriet Martineau to tell her tale in her own words, without comment; but on reference to our chapter on "Edge Hill," in the FIRST SERIES of this work, something pertinent to the theme will be found.

SWINSTY HALL.

IN the picturesque valley of the Washburn, high up on the right bank, in the parish of Otley, stands Swinsty Hall. It is a large building, in a kind of Elizabethan architecture, says Mr. William Grainge, and "on its first creation would, doubtless, be considered a great, grand, and glorious mansion, with its many gables and multitudinous windows. The greatest wonder is to see it here at all, in such a lonely place. It has been built in a substantial manner, and at a heavy cost. The ground plan is that of an irregular quadrangle, with a projecting wing on the north-west. The south front is the most interesting portion, three stories in height;

the central rooms, the fronts of which project some distance from the main line on the first and second floors, are each lighted by a window of twenty lights, divided by a transom, which gives forty openings in all; indeed, that side has much the appearance of an enormous lanthorn."

"Swinsty Hall," continues Mr. Grainge, "has fallen somewhat from its high estate in modern times, stripped of its antique furniture, and now (*i.e.* 1864) occupied by the families of four farmers (a giant or enchanter, with a rambling ghost or two, would be a much more appropriate tenantry), the barns and outhouses clustered around give it quite a singular and unique appearance:

"A kind of old hobgoblin hall,
Now somewhat fallen to decay,
With weather-stains upon the wall,
And stairways worn, and crazy doors,
And creaking and uneven floors,
And chimneys huge and tall.

"A region of repose it seems,
A place of slumber and of dreams,
Remote among the wooded hills,
For there no noisy railway speeds;
In torch-race, scattering smoke and gleeds;
But, noon and night, the parting teams
Stop under the great oaks, that throw
Tangles of light and shade below,
On roofs, and doors, and window-sills. . . .

"Singular to relate," continues Mr. Grainge, "there is no road to this house deserving of the name, the principal carriage-road being a mere random trackway across the unenclosed common, so that it may be said

to be isolated from the world, or, rather, to form a little old-fashioned world of its own."

There is, as might be guessed, a strange weird legend connected with this old out-of-the-way dwelling, and it is generally told, says Mr. Grainge, in the following way:—

"The builder of the Hall was a man of the name of Robinson, who, in his youth, was a poor weaver, and resided in a humble cottage near where the Hall now stands. This cottage, now doing duty as a cow-house, yet remains to vouch for the truth of the story. This young man left his humble home, travelled to London at a time when the plague was raging in that city; when death had left many houses totally uninhabited and desolate, wherein no survivors were left to bury the dead, and no heirs to claim their wealth. Our north country adventurer seeing this state of things, not forgetting himself amid the general mourning and confusion, took possession of the gold thus left without an owner, to such an extent, that he loaded a waggon and team of horses with the wealth thus acquired; with which he returned homeward, and, in due time, again reached the place of his birth. But the story of the plague had reached the place as soon as himself and his gold, and none of his former neighbours would admit him into their dwellings, for fear of contagion; so he took up his abode in a barn, which still remains. In order to cleanse his gold from any infectious taint which might possibly cling to it, Robinson washed the whole carefully in the Greenwell Spring, which well yet

remains, bearing the same name. With the wealth thus acquired he purchased the estate and built the Hall at Swinsty."

For a considerable period, many generations of Robinsons enjoyed the property, until, at last, it passed by marriage to the Bramleys, who still enjoy it, or did quite recently.

But, according to popular faith, the founder of the family, the original possessor of the Hall, cannot cleanse himself, so readily as he did his gold, from its contamination: his troubled spirit still haunts the old spot. At certain times, those who are gifted with the faculty of seeing apparitions, may behold that of Robinson bending over the Greenwell Spring, and striving to cleanse his strangely acquired coin—coin even more spectral than himself. There he bends, and rubs, and rubs, and rubs away at his ghastly spoil, and never seems satisfied that it is freed from its taint, or, perhaps, from its stains: who knows?

SYKES LUMB FARM.

"In a secluded dell, on the banks of Mellor Brook," says Mr. T. T. Wilkinson, "not far from the famous old Hall of Samlesbury, near Blackburn" (a haunted old Hall whereof an account will be found in these pages), "stands a lonely farm-house, which was occu-

pied for many generations by a family named Sykes. They gave their name to the homestead, or *vice versâ*, on its being cleared from the forest; and, from the fact of the pastures lying at a short distance from a broad and deep portion of the brook, it became generally known by the name of Sykes Lumb Farm."

This Sykes family, however, as Mr. Wilkinson records, have long since passed to dust, and many generations of strangers have dwelt on their lands, but the doings of one particular member of the race have been handed down, from year to year, by tradition, and still exercise a potent influence upon the minds of the surrounding population. Before referring to the especial tradition for which Sykes Lumb Farm is noted, it may be as well to point out that it possesses an uncanny reputation for a supernatural inhabitant other than the apparition from which its fame is chiefly derived. In one work by Mr. Wilkinson it is referred to as the residence of a noted *boggart*, or domestic familiar, in these terms:—

"When in a good humour, this noted goblin will milk the cows, pull the hay, fodder the cattle, harness the horses, load the carts, and stack the crops. When irritated by the utterance of some unguarded expression or marked disrespect, either from the farmer or his servants, the cream-mugs are then smashed to atoms, no butter can be obtained by churning, the horses and other cattle are turned loose, or driven into the woods, two cows will sometimes be found fastened in the same stall, no hay can be pulled from the mow; and all the

while the wicked imp sits grinning with delight upon one of the cross-beams in the barn. At other times the horses are unable to draw the empty carts across the farm-yard; if loaded, they are upset, whilst the cattle tremble with fear without any visible cause. Nor do the inmates of the house experience any better or gentler usage. During the night the clothes are said to be violently torn from off the beds of the offending parties, whilst, by invisible hands, they themselves are dragged down the stone stairs by the legs, one step at a time, after a most uncomfortable manner."

The way in which this *boggart* is described as haunting Sykes Lumb Farm is in no way out of the common, especially in Lancashire and the neighbouring counties, but it is of interest in this case, as showing the popular belief that the place is troubled in some way. In what way the house and grounds are really believed to be, or, until recently, to have been, haunted is thus described in Roby and Wilkinson's *Lancashire Legends*, and William Dobson's *Rambles by the Ribble*.

In the days when the farm was owned by old Sykes and his wife, careful living and more than ordinary thrift enabled the old couple to gather together a fair amount of wealth, which, added to the continual hoarding of the farmer's ancestors, caused the pair to be regarded as wonderfully rich, in those days. Whatever the facts as to their wealth may have been, they saw its possession ultimately jeopardized by civil troubles and national famine. It was their chief, if not their only object of affection, as they had neither son nor daughter,

nor any other object upon which to expend their love; therefore, the risk of losing it gave them more than ordinary anxiety. Old Sykes does not appear to have clung to their darling hoard with half the affection displayed by his worthy consort; her dread of losing it was intense. Besides, says our chief authority, she had no "notion of becoming dependent upon the bounty of the Southworths of the Hall, nor did she relish the idea of soliciting charity at the gates of the lordly Abbot of Whalley. The treasure was therefore carefully secured in earthenware jars, and was then buried deep beneath the roots of an apple-tree in the orchard. Years passed away, and the troubles of the country did not cease. The Yorkists at length lost the ascendancy, and the reins of government passed into the hands of the Lancastrians; until at last the northern feud was healed by the mingling of the White Rose with the Red. Henry VII. sat upon the throne with Elizabeth of York as Queen; but, ere peace thus blessed the land, old Sykes had paid the debt of nature, and left his widow the sole possessor of their buried wealth. She, too, soon passed away; and, as the legend asserts, so suddenly that she had no opportunity to disclose the place where she had deposited her treasure. Rumour had not failed to give her the credit of being possessed of considerable wealth; but, although her relatives made diligent search, they were unsuccessful in discovering the place of the hidden jars.

"The farm passed into other hands, and old Sykes's wife might have been forgotten had not her ghost, un-

able to find rest, continued occasionally to visit the old farm-house. Many a time, in the dusk of the evening, have the neighbouring peasants met an old wrinkled woman, dressed in ancient garb, passing along the gloomy road which leads across the Lumb, but fear always prevented them from speaking. She never lifted her head, but helped herself noiselessly along by means of a crooked stick, which bore no resemblance to those then in use. At times she was seen in the old barn, on other occasions in the house, but more frequently in the orchard, standing by an apple-tree which still flourished over the place where the buried treasure was afterwards said to have been found. Generations passed away, and still her visits continued. One informant minutely described her withered visage, her short quaintly-cut gown, her striped petticoat, and her stick. He was so much alarmed that he ran away from the place, notwithstanding that he had engaged to perform some urgent work. 'She was not there,' he gravely said, 'when I went to pluck an apple, but no sooner did I raise my hand towards the fruit, than she made her appearance just before me.' At last, it is said, an occupier of the farm, when somewhat elated by liquor, ventured to question her as to the reasons of her visits. She returned no answer, but, after moving slowly towards the stump of an old apple-tree, she pointed significantly towards a portion of the orchard which had never been disturbed. On search being made, the treasure was found deep down in the earth, and as the soil was being removed, the venerable-looking shade was

seen standing on the edge of the trench. When the last jar was lifted out, an unearthly smile passed over her withered features; her bodily form became less and less distinct, until at last it disappeared altogether.

"Since then the old farm-house has ceased to be haunted. Old Sykes's wife is believed to have found eternal rest; but there are yet many, both old and young, who walk with quickened pace past the Lumb whenever they are belated, fearful lest they should be once more confronted with the dreaded form of its unearthly visitor."

TUNSTEAD FARM.

TUNSTEAD Farm-house is about a mile and a half from Chapel-en-le-Frith, in Derbyshire, and is only distinguished from numberless other English farm-houses by the fact that it is the possessor of a most eccentric skull. John Hutchinson, in his *Tour through the High Peak*, published in 1809, remarks that this skull, although popularly known by the not very reverent male cognomen of "Dickie," has "always been said to be that of a female. Why it should have been baptized with a name belonging to the male sex seems," as Hutchinson says, "somewhat anomalous; still, not more wonderful than a many, if not all, of its very singular pranks and services. To enumerate all the

particulars of the incalculably serviceable acts and deeds done by 'Dickie,' would form a wonder; but not a wonder past belief, for hundreds of the inhabitants of the locality for miles around have full and firm faith in its mystical performances. How long it has been located at the present house is not known; of whose body in the flesh it was a member is equally as mysterious, save that it is said (but what has not been said about it that is not pure fiction!) that one of two coheiresses residing here was murdered, and who declared, in her dying moments, that her bones should remain in the place for ever. It is further said that the skull did not, some years back, appear the least decayed."

Hutchinson's account is supplemented by Mr. William Andrews, in his *Historic Romance,* with these remarks:—"It is believed that if the skull be removed everything on the farm will go wrong—the cows will be dry and barren, the sheep have the rot, and the horses fall down, breaking their knees and otherwise injuring themselves. The most amusing part of the superstition connected with 'Dickie' is the following:—When the London and North-Western Railway to Manchester was being made, the foundations of a bridge gave way in the yielding sand and bog on the side of the reservoir, and, after several attempts to build the bridge had failed, it was found necessary to divert the highway, and pass it under the railway on higher ground. These engineering failures were attributed to the malevolent influence of 'Dickie,' . . . but when the road was

diverted, it was bridged successfully, because no longer on 'Dickie's' territory."

The influence thus exercised by the Tunstead skull against the construction of so unghostly a work as a railroad, inspired Samuel Laycock, the Lancashire bard, to publish, in a local paper, a poetic *Address to Dickie.*

ULLSWATER.

In a volume styled *News from the Invisible World*, the following story is related, as given from an account drawn up by the lady herself, "who was most literally exact and faithful to the truth." Miss Elizabeth Smith, the lady referred to, was the daughter of Colonel Smith, of Piercefield, on the river Wye, and the marvellous incident is said to have happened to her during her residence at Ullswater, in the winter of 1800. The version of the story given in the above volume is as follows:—

There is, on the western side of Ullswater, a fine cataract (or, in the language of the country, a *force*), known by the name of "Aira Force," and it is of importance enough, especially in rainy seasons, to attract numerous visitors from among the "Lakers." Thither with some purpose of sketching, not the whole scene, but some picturesque feature of it, Miss Smith was

gone, quite unaccompanied. The road to it lies through Gobarrow Park; and it was usual, at that time, to take a guide from the family of the Duke of Norfolk's keeper, who lived in Lyulph's Tower, a solitary hunting-lodge, built by His Grace for the purpose of an annual visit which he used to pay to his estates in that part of England. She, however, thinking herself sufficiently familiar with the localities, had declined to encumber her movements with such an attendant; consequently, she was alone. For half an hour or more, she continued to ascend; and, being a good "cragswoman," from the experience she had won in Wales as well as in northern England, she had reached an altitude much beyond what would generally be thought corresponding to the time occupied. The path had vanished altogether; but she continued to trace out one for herself amongst the stones which had fallen from the "force," sometimes approaching much nearer to the openings allowed by the broken nature of the rock. Pressing forward in this manner, and still never looking back, all at once she found herself in a little stony chamber, from which there was no egress possible in advance. She stopped and looked up. There was a frightful silence in the air. She felt a sudden palpitation at her heart, and a panic from she knew not what. Turning, however, hastily, she soon wound herself out of this aerial dungeon; but by steps so rapid and agitated that, at length, on looking round she found herself standing at the brink of a chasm, frightful to look down. That way, it was clear enough,

all retreat was impossible; but, on turning round, retreat seemed in every direction alike quite impossible.

Down the chasm, at least, she might have leaped, though with little or no chance of escaping with life; but in all other quarters it seemed to her eye that at no price could she effect an exit, since the rocks stood round her in a semicircle, all lofty, all perpendicular, all glazed with trickling water, or smooth as polished porpyhry. Yet how, then, had she reached the point? The same track, if she could discover it, would surely secure her escape. Round and round she walked; gazed with almost despairing eyes; her breath came thicker and thicker; for path she could not trace by which it was possible for her to have entered. Finding herself grow more and more confused, and every instant nearer to sinking into some fainting fit or convulsion, she resolved to sit down and turn her thoughts quietly into some less exciting channel. This she did; gradually recovered some self-possession; and then suddenly a thought rose up to her, that she was in the hands of God, and that He would not forsake her. . . .

Once again she rose, and supporting herself upon a little sketching-stool that folded up into a stick, she looked upwards in the hope that some shepherd might, by chance, be wandering in those aerial regions; but nothing could she see, except the tall birches growing at the brink of the highest summits, and the clouds sailing overhead. Suddenly, however, as she swept the whole circuit of her station with her alarmed eye, she

saw clearly, about two hundred yards beyond her own position, a lady in a white muslin morning-robe, such as were then universally worn by young ladies until dinner-time. The lady beckoned with a gesture, and in a manner that, in a moment, gave her confidence to advance—how, she could not guess, but in some way that baffled all power to retrace it, she found instantaneously the outlet which previously had escaped her. She continued to advance towards the lady, whom now, in the same moment, she found to be standing upon the other side of the "force," and, also, to be her own sister. How or why that young lady, whom she had left at home earnestly occupied with her own studies, should have followed and overtaken her, filled her with perplexity. But this was no situation for putting questions; for the guiding sister began to descend, and by a few simple gestures, just serving to indicate when Miss Elizabeth was to approach, and when to leave, the brink of the torrent, she gradually led her down to a platform of rock, from which the further descent was safe and conspicuous. There Miss Smith paused, in order to take breath from her panic, as well as to exchange greetings and questions with her sister. But sister was none! All trace of her had vanished; and when, two hours after, she reached her home, Miss Smith found her sister in the same situation and employment in which she had left her; and the whole family assured Elizabeth that her sister had never stirred from the house!

WADDOW HALL.

Mr. William Dobson's interesting *Rambles by the Ribble*, furnish one or two accounts of local dwellings labouring under the uncanny odour of being haunted. Mr. Dobson, although evidently no believer in ghosts, and unable to resist the temptation of having a fling at their erratic courses, tells of their doings with a chronicler's exactitude.

Writing in 1864, our authority says that Waddow Hall, in the township of Waddington, Yorkshire, was then in the occupation of James Garnett, Esquire, Mayor of Clitheroe. The property of the Ramsden family, Waddow Hall is situated in a pleasant park, which, though not of great extent, is of great beauty.

The house stands on a knoll, with pleasant woodlands about it. At the foot of a gentle slope flows the Ribble; the castle and church of Clitheroe are seen to advantage, the smoke only indicating where the town of Clitheroe lies, an intervening hill hiding the town itself from view. The mansion contains many portraits of its former owners and various members of their family, but the main interest of Waddow appears to arise from its being the scene of an old legend, which the folks of Clitheroe and the neighbouring Yorkshire villages are never weary of repeating, and for the truth of which they are perfectly willing to vouch. Many of the older inhabitants of Clitheroe and Waddington would as soon

doubt the Scriptures as they would a single iota of the following tradition.

In the grounds of Waddow and near the banks of the Ribble, there is a spring called Peg o' Nell's Well, and good water the spring sendeth forth in plenty. Near the spring is a headless, now almost shapeless figure, said to be a representation of the famous Peg herself.

Peg o' Nell, as I learned, says Mr. Dobson, was a young woman who, in days of yore, was a servant at Waddow Hall. On one occasion she was going to the well for water, the very well that to this day supplies the Hall with water for culinary purposes. She had had a quarrel with the lord or lady of Waddow, who, in a spirit of anger, not common, it is to be hoped, with masters and mistresses, wished that she might fall and break her neck. It was winter, and the ground was coated with ice; her pattens tripped in some way or other, Peggy fell, and the sad malediction was fully realised. To be revenged on her evil wisher, Peggy was wont to revisit her former home in the spirit, and torment her master and mistress by "making night hideous." Every disagreeable noise that was heard at Waddow was attributed to Peggy; every accident that occurred in the neighbourhood was through Peggy. No chicken was stolen, no cow died, no sheep strayed, no child was ill, no youth "took bad ways," but Peg was the evil genius. "When a Waddow farmer had stopped too long at the 'Dule ups' Dun,' and going home late had slipped off the hipping-stones at Brungerley into the river, or a Clitheroe burgess, when in

Bowland, had, like 'Tam o' Shanter' sat too long 'fast by an ingle bleezing finely,' while 'the ale was growing better,' and had fallen off his horse in going home, and broken a limb, it was not the host's liquor that was charged with the mishap, but on Peggy's shoulders that the blame was laid."

What was worse, in addition to these perpetual annoyances, every seven years Peg required a life; and the story is that "Peg's Night," as the time of sacrifice at each anniversary was called, was duly observed; and if no living animal were ready as a septennial offering to her manes, a human being became inexorably the victim. Consequently it grew to be the custom on "Peg's Night" to drown a bird, or a cat, or a dog in the river, and, a life being thus given, for another seven years Peggy was appeased.

One night, at an inn in the neighbourhood, as the wind blew and the rattling showers rose on the blast, "and as the swollen Ribble roared over the hipping-stones, a young man, not in the soberest mood, had to go from Waddington to Clitheroe. No bridge then spanned the Ribble at Bungerley; the only means of crossing the river was by the stones, which Henry the Sixth, in his last struggle for liberty, had tripped over towards 'Clitherwood.' He was told he must not venture over the water, it was not safe. He must be at Clitheroe that night, was his response, and go he would. 'But,' said the young woman of the inn, by way of climax to the other arguments used to induce him not to go onward, 'it 's Peg o' Nell's night, and she has

not had her life.' He cared not for Peg o' Nell; he laughed at her alleged requirement, gave loose to his horse's rein, and was soon at Bungerley. The following morning horse and rider had alike perished, and, of course, many believed the calamity was through Peg's malevolence."

Peg, it is averred, is still as insatiable as ever, and many would dread to dare her wrath.

WATTON ABBEY.

Mr. F. Ross is contributing a most interesting series of antiquarian, historical, and folk-lore sketches to the *Leeds Mercury*, entitled, "Yorkshire Legends and Traditions." Some of these sketches have already been made use of for this volume, and from one on Watton Abbey, which appeared in the *Mercury* for June 1884, the following particulars are derived.

The Tudor style of building which goes by the name of Watton Abbey, never was an Abbey, Mr. Ross informs us, but was a Gilbertine Priory. It is situated between the towns of Driffield and Beverley, in a charming sequestered spot, surrounded by patriarchal trees. It has been occupied for some years past as a private residence, after having served for several years as an educational establishment. The present residence appears to have been erected since the Reformation,

and for its erection nearly the whole of the original conventual buildings appear to have been destroyed. Two hundred years ago the somewhat extensive remains of the old Priory were removed and made use of to repair Bolton Minster.

The original nunnery is supposed to have been founded in the earliest period of Anglo-Saxon Christianity. In the ninth century the establishment is believed to have been destroyed by the Danes, and to have been refounded in the twelfth century by Lord Eustace Fitz-John of Knaresborough, at the instigation of Murdac, Archbishop of York, and in atonement for his manifold crimes. He endowed it with the Lordship of Watton and its appurtenances, for the benefit of his own soul, and the souls of his parents, relatives, friends, and servants. It was to provide for thirteen canons, and thirty-six nuns of the new Gilbertine Order, who were to reside in the same block of buildings, but with a party-wall for the separation of sexes; the canons "to serve the nuns perpetually in terrene, as well as in divine matters."

Murdac had obtained preferment from Thurstan, Archbishop of York, and when that dignitary died, Murdac headed the Cistercians against William Fitzherbert, the nephew and nominee of King Stephen for the vacant Archbishopric. Appeal was made to Pope Eugenius, and His Holiness suspended Fitzherbert, the Archbishop elect. Out of revenge for this, Fitzherbert went, with his supporters, to Fountains, of which place Murdac was now Abbot, and after an ineffectual search

for his rival, set fire to the abbey, and retired. The deed caused an immense sensation. Fitzherbert's triumph was short; he was deposed from his Archbishopric, and, in 1147, Murdac elected in his stead.

Murdac went to Rome and had his election confirmed by the Pope, but on returning to England found York barred against his entry. He retired to Beverley, but the King refused to recognise him, sequestered the stalls of York, and fined Beverley for harbouring him. Murdac, however, appears to have continued to perform all the functions of his exalted office, even excommunicating certain Church dignitaries, and laying the northern metropolis under an interdict. He died at Beverley in 1153, and was interred at York Cathedral.

Soon after Murdac's return from Rome he greatly promoted the welfare of the re-established Watton, and placed within its walls for education, with a view of her ultimately taking the veil, a child of about four years old. Of this little girl Mr. Ross furnishes the following story:—

"Elfrida, the child whom Murdac had placed in the convent, was a merry, vivacious little creature; and whilst but a child was a source of amusement to the sisterhood, who, although prim and demure in bearing, and some of them sour-tempered and acid in their tempers, were wont to smile at her youthful frolics and ringing laugh; but as she grew older, her outbursts of merriment, and the sallies of wit that began to animate her conversation, were checked, as being inconsistent with the character of a young lady who was now enrolled

as novice, preparatory to taking the veil. As she advanced towards womanhood her form gradually developed into a most symmetrical figure; and her features became the perfection of beauty, set off with a transparent delicacy of complexion, such as would have rendered her a centre of attraction even among the beauties of a Royal Court. This excited the jealousy of the sisters, who were chiefly elderly and middle-aged spinsters, whose homely and somewhat coarse features had proved detrimental to their hopes of obtaining husbands. They began to treat her with scornful looks, chilling neglect, and petty persecutions; but when she, later on, evinced a manifest repugnance to convent life, ridiculed the ways of the holy sisters, and even satirised them, they charged her with entertaining rebellious and ungodly sentiments, and subjected her to penances and other modes of wholesome correction, such as they considered would subdue her worldly spirit.

"Sprightly and light-hearted as she was, Elfrida was not happy, immured as she was within these detested walls, and condemned to assist in wearisome services, such as she thought might perhaps be congenial to the souls of her elder sisters, whose hopes of worldly happiness and conjugal endearment had been blighted, but which were altogether unsuited for one so beautiful (for she knew that she was fair, and was vain of her looks) and so cheerful-minded as herself; and she longed with intense desire to escape, mingle with the outer world, and have free intercourse with the other sex.

"According to the charter of endowment, the lay

brethren of the monastery were entrusted with the management of the secular affairs of the nunnery, which necessitated their admission within its portals on certain occasions for conference with the prioress. On these occasions Elfrida would cast furtive and very un-nunlike glances upon their persons. She was particularly attracted by one of them, a young man of prepossessing mien and seductive style of speech, and she felt her heart beat wildly whenever he came with the other visitors. He noticed her surreptitious glances, and saw that she was exceedingly beautiful, and his heart responded to the sentiment he felt that he had inspired in hers. They maintained this silent but eloquent language of love for some time, and soon found means of having stolen interviews under the darkness of night, when vows of everlasting love were interchanged, and led, eventually, to consequences which, at the outset, were not dreamt of by the erring pair.

"Suspicion having been excited by her altered form, she was summoned before her superiors on a charge of 'transgressing the conventual rules and violating one of the most stringent laws of monastic life,' and as concealment was impossible she boldly confessed her fault, adding that she had no vocation for a convent life, and desired to be banished from the community. This request could not be listened to for a moment. The culprit had brought a scandal and indelible stain upon the fair fame of the house, which must, at any cost, be concealed from the world; and her open avowal of her guilt raised in the breasts of the pious sisterhood a

perfect fury of indignation, and a determination to inflict immediate and condign punishment on her. It was variously suggested that she should be burnt to death, that she should be walled up alive, that she should be flayed, that her flesh should be torn from her bones with red-hot pincers, that she should be roasted to death before a fire, &c.; but the more prudent and aged averted these extreme measures, and suggested some milder forms of punishment, which were at once carried out. The miserable object of their vengeance was stripped of her clothing, stretched on the floor, and scourged with rods until the blood trickled down profusely from her lacerated back. She was then cast into a noisome dungeon, without light, fettered by iron chains to the floor, and supplied with only bread and water, 'which was administered with bitter taunts and reproaches.'

"Meanwhile the young man, her paramour, had left the monastery, and as the nuns were desirous of inflicting some terrible punishment upon him for his horrible crime, they extorted from Elfrida, under promise that she should be released and given up to him, the confession that he was still in the neighbourhood in disguise, and that, not knowing of the discovery that had been made, he would come to visit her, and make the usual signal of throwing a stone on the roof over her sleeping cell. The Prioress made this known to the brethren of the monastery, and arranged with them for his capture. The following night he came, looked cautiously round, and then threw the stone, when the monks rushed out of

ambush, cudgelled him soundly, and then took him a prisoner into the house. The younger part of the nuns, inflamed with a pious zeal, demanded the custody of the prisoner, on pretence of gaining further information. Their request was granted, and taking him to an unfrequented part of the convent, they committed on his person such brutal atrocities as cannot be translated without polluting the page on which they are written; and, to increase the horror, the lady was brought forth to be witness of the abominable scene.'

Whilst lying in her dungeon, Elfrida became penitent and conscious of having committed a gross crime, and one night, whilst sleeping in her fetters, Archbishop Murdac appeared to her and charged her with having cursed him. She replied that she certainly had cursed him for having placed her in so uncongenial a sphere. 'Rather curse yourself,' said he, 'for having given way to temptation.' 'So I do,' she answered, 'and I regret having imputed the blame to you.' He then exhorted her to repentance and the daily repetition of certain psalms, and then vanished,—a vision which afforded her much consolation.

"The holy sisters were now much troubled on the question of what should be done with the infant which was expected daily, and preparations were made for its reception; when Elfrida was again visited by the Archbishop, accompanied by two women, who, 'with the holy aid of the Archbishop, safely delivered her of the infant, which they bore away in their arms, covered with a fair white cloth.' When the nuns came the next morn-

ing they found her in perfect health and restored to her youthful appearance, without any signs of the accouchement, and charged her with murdering the infant—a very improbable idea, seeing that she was still chained to the floor. She narrated what had occurred, but was not believed. The next night all her fetters were miraculously removed, and when her cell was entered the following morning she was found standing free, and the chains not to be found.

"The Father Superior of the convent was then called in, and he invited Alured, Abbot of Rievaulx, to assist him in the investigation of the case, who decided that it was a miraculous intervention, and the Abbot departed, saying, 'What God hath cleansed call not thou common or unclean, and whom He hath loosed thou mayest not bind.'

"What afterwards became of Elfrida is not stated, but we may presume that after these miraculous events she would be admitted as a thrice holy member of the sisterhood, despite her little peccadillo."

Now there is a haunted room in Watton Abbey, and the spectre which frequents it is popularly known as "The Headless Nun of Watton." The belief of the learned is, however, that the apparition which haunts Watton is not that of the transgressing nun of the twelfth, but a brutally beheaded lady of the seventeenth, century. Mr. Ross opines that the story-tellers have confused the two traditions, and have treated them as one story, regarding the two heroines as identical. No one would appear to have seen the possibility of the

old place being haunted by two ghosts—by rival apparitions!

The stories of both the heroines are narrated by Mr. Ross; that of the frail nun being derived from Alured of Rievaulx's account. The old monkish chronicler vouches for the truth of his narration, saying, "Let no one doubt the truth of this account, for I was an eye-witness to many of the facts, and the remainder were related to me by persons of such mature age and distinguished position that I cannot doubt the accuracy of their statements."

So much for the account of the fair nun; that of her more unfortunate sister is of comparatively recent date. According to the later tradition, as related to us by Mr. Ross, "a lady of distinction who then occupied the house (at Watton), was a devoted Royalist in the great Civil War which resulted in the death of King Charles. It was after the battle of Marston Moor, which was a death-blow to the Royalists north of the Humber, and when the Parliamentarians dominated the broad lands of Yorkshire, that a party of fanatical Roundheads came into the neighbourhood of Watton, 'breathing out threatenings and slaughter,' against the 'Malignants,' and especially against such as still clung to the 'vile rags of the whore of Babylon,' vowing to put all such to the sword. The lady of Watton, who was a devout Catholic, heard of this band of Puritan soldiers, who were 'rampaging' over the Wolds, and of the barbarous murders of which they had been guilty. Her husband was away, fighting in the ranks of the King, down

Oxford way, and she was left without any protector excepting a handful of servants, male and female, who would be of no use against a band of armed soldiers, and it was with great fear and trembling that she heard of their arrival at Driffield, some three or four miles distant, where they had been plundering and maltreating 'the Philistines,' fearing more for her infant than herself, as she believed the prevalent exaggerated rumour, that it was a favourite amusement with them to toss babies up in the air, and catch them on the points of their pikes.

"At length news was brought that the marauders were on the march to Watton, for the purpose of plundering it, as the home of a 'malignant,' and the lady, for better security, shut herself, with her child and her jewels, in the wainscotted room, hoping in case of extremity to escape by means of the secret stair, and in the meanwhile, committed herself and her child to the care of the Virgin Mother. It was not long ere the band of soldiers arrived and hammered at the door, calling aloud for admittance, but met with no response. They were about breaking down the door, and went in search of implements for the purpose, when they caught sight of a low archway opening upon the moat, which they guessed to be a side entrance to the house, and, crossing the moat, they found the stair, which they ascended, and came to the panel, which they concluded was a disguised door. A few blows sufficed to dash it open, and they came into the presence of the lady, who was prostrate before a crucifix. Rising up, she demanded what they wanted,

and wherefore this rude intrusion. They replied that they had come to despoil the 'Egyptian' who owned the mansion, and, if he had been present, to smite him to death as a worshipper of idols and an abomination in the eyes of God.

"An angry altercation ensued, the lady, who possessed a high spirit, making a free use of her tongue in upbraidings and reproaches for their dastardly conduct on the Wolds, of which she had heard, to which they listened very impatiently, and replied in coarse language, not fit for a lady's ears, at the same time demanding the plate and other valuables of the house. She scornfully refused to give them up, and told them that if they wanted them they must find them for themselves, and, at length, so provoked them by her taunts that they cried, 'Hew down with the sword the woman of Belial and the spawn of the malignant,' and suiting the action to the word, they caught her child from her arms, dashed its brains out against the wall, and then cut her down and 'hewed' off her head, after which they plundered the house and departed with their spoil.

"It must not be supposed that these ruffians were a fair specimen of the brave, God-fearing men who fought under Fairfax, and put Newcastle and Rupert to flight at Marston Moor, who fought with the sword in one hand and the Bible in the other, who laid the axe at the root of Royal arbitrary prerogative, and were the real authors of the civil and religious liberty which we now enjoy. But, as in all times of civil commotion, there

were evil-minded wretches who, for purposes of plunder, assumed the garb and adopted the phraseology of the noble-minded soldiers of Fairfax and Hampden and the Ironsides of Cromwell, out-Puritaned them in their hypocritical cant, bringing disgrace and scandal upon the armies with which they associated themselves. And such were the villains who despoiled Watton, and slew so barbarously the poor lady and her infant; and from that time the ghost of the lady has haunted the room in which the deed was perpetrated."

In the present house at Watton, says our authority, "there is a chamber wainscotted throughout with panelled oak, one of the panels forming a door, so accurately fitted that it cannot be distinguished from the other panels. It is opened by a secret spring, and communicates with a stone stair that goes down to the moat; and it may be that the room was a hiding-place for the Jesuits or priests of the Catholic Church when they were so ruthlessly hunted down and barbarously executed in the Elizabethan and Jacobean reigns. The room is reputed to be haunted by the ghost of a headless lady with an infant in her arms, who comes, or came thither formerly, to sleep there nightly, the bed-clothes being found the following morning in a disordered state, as they would be after a person had been sleeping in them. If by chance any person had daring enough to occupy the room, the ghost would come, minus the head, dressed in blood-stained garments, with her infant in her arms, and would stand motionless at the foot of the bed for a while, and then vanish. A

visitor on one occasion, who knew nothing of the legend, was put to sleep in the chamber, who, in the morning, stated that his slumbers had been disturbed by a spectral visitant, in the form of a lady with bloody raiment and an infant, and that her features bore a strange resemblance to those of a lady whose portrait hung in the room; from which it would appear that on that special occasion she had donned her head."

Does not the appearance of this last-seen apparition seem to favour the theory, despite our authority's ironical remark, that Watton may be haunted by the apparitions of *both* the unfortunate women whose stories have just been narrated?

WYECOLLER HALL.

SPECTRE Horsemen and Wild Huntsmen throng the traditionary lore of all European nations. Those who wish to trace the theme to its earliest origin, should consult Mr. Charles Hardwick's work on the *Traditions, Superstitions, and Folk-lore* of the north of England. A typical legend is related by Sam Bamford, in his poem of *The Wild Rider,* of a Sir Ashton Lever of whom it was asserted that he performed such wonderful feats of horsemanship, "that no horse could have carried him save one of more than earthly breed." Other writers, both British and foreign, have celebrated in prose and

verse the deeds of spectre riders and their ghostly steeds, but the following account is the one most closely allied to the theme set before us: it is in Harland's *Lancashire Legends*, and is of contemporary belief.

"Wyecoller Hall, near Colne, was long the seat of the Cunliffes of Billington. They were noted persons in their day, and the names of successive members of the family are attached to documents relating to the property of the Abbots of Whalley. But evil days came, and their ancestral estates passed out of their hands. In the days of the Commonwealth their loyalty cost them dear; and ultimately they retired to Wyecoller with a remnant only of their once extensive estates. About 1819 the last of the family passed away, and the Hall is now a mass of ruins. Little but the antique fire-place remains entire; and even the room alluded to in the following legend cannot now be identified.

"Tradition says that once every year a spectre horseman visits Wyecoller Hall. He is attired in the costume of the early Stuart period, and the trappings of his horse are of a most uncouth description. On the evening of his visit the weather is always wild and tempestuous. There is no moon to light the lonely roads, and the residents of the district do not venture out of their cottages. When the wind howls the loudest the horseman can be heard dashing up the road at full speed, and after crossing the narrow bridge, he suddenly stops at the door of the Hall. The rider then dismounts and makes his way up the broad oaken stairs into one of the rooms of the house. Dreadful screams,

as from a woman, are then heard, which soon subside into groans. The horseman then makes his appearance at the door—at once mounts his steed—and gallops on the road he came. His body can be seen through by those who may chance to be present; his horse appears to be wild with rage, and its nostrils stream with fire.

"The tradition is that one of the Cunliffes murdered his wife in that room, and that the spectre horseman is the ghost of the murderer, who is doomed to pay an annual visit to the home of his victim. She is said to have predicted the extinction of the family, which (prediction) has literally been fulfilled."

WARDLEY HALL.

MANY a curious chapter has been written about the human cranium, but, probably, none more singular than that titled "Skull Superstitions," by Mr. William Andrews, in his work on *Historic Romance*. Among other instances of the belief prevalent in certain localities of the way in which skulls influence the fortunes of families, or at any of their residences, he cites the singular and oft-referred-to case of the empty head-piece kept at Wardley Hall. This ancient pile of buildings, erected in the reign of the sixth Edward, is about seven miles from Manchester, and is historically noted for its possession of an unburied human skull.

The old Hall is situated in the midst of a small

woody glade, and was originally surrounded by a moat, except on the east side, which was protected by natural defences. In *Lancashire Legends*, Mr. T. T. Wilkinson says: "This black and white half-timbered edifice is of a quadrangular form, consisting of ornamented wood and plaster frames, interlined with bricks (plastered and white-washed, the woodwork being painted black), and entered by a covered archway, opening into a court-yard in the centre, like so many of the manor-houses of the same age in Lancashire. About 1830 it was in a ruinous condition, one part being occupied as a farm-house, and the other formed into a cluster of nine cottages. The Hall has since been thoroughly renovated, and has been occupied for many years by a gentleman farmer and colliery owner."

Wardley Hall, and the surrounding property, after having been in the possession of various gentle families, in the early part of the seventeenth century passed into the hands of the Downes, and the Hall became the residence of Roger Downe. Roger, the grandson of this gentleman, and the heir to the property, is described as one of the most dissolute courtiers of Charles the Second's Court. After a reckless career of crime, this young man, the last male representative of his family, was slain in a drunken brawl, and, says tradition, his head having been severed from his body, was sent as a *memento mori* to his sister. That head, according to popular faith, has been kept at the Hall ever since, none of the tenants having ever been enabled to get rid of it.

Mr. Andrews refers to various accounts relating to this noted relic, but quotes, as the most curious, one found in the manuscripts of Thomas Barritt, the Manchester antiquary, describing his own visit to Wardley Hall about the end of the last century. That account it will be well to follow.

"A human skull which, time out of mind, hath had a superstitious veneration paid to it by [the occupiers of the Hall] not permitting it to be removed from its situation, which is on the topmost step of a staircase. There is a tradition that, if removed or ill-used, some uncommon noise and disturbance always follows, to the terror of the whole house; yet I cannot persuade myself this is always the case. But, some years ago, I and three of my acquaintances went to view this surprising piece of household furniture, and found it as above mentioned, and bleached white with weather, that beats in upon it from a four-square window in the hall, which the tenants never permit to be glazed or filled up, thus to oblige the skull, which, they say, is unruly and disturbed at the hole not being always open.

"However, one of us, who was last in company with the skull, removed it from its place into a dark part of the room, and then left, and returned home; but the night but one following, such a storm arose about the house, of wind and lightning, as tore down some trees, and unthatched out-housing. We hearing of this, my father went over in a few days after to see his mother, who lived near the Hall, and was witness to the wreck the storm had made. Yet all this might have hap-

pened had the skull never been removed; but, withal, it keeps alive the credibility of its believers.

"What I can learn of the above affair from old people in the neighbourhood is, that a young man of the Downes family, being in London, one night in his frolics vowed to his companions that he would kill the first man he met; and accordingly he ran his sword through a man immediately, a tailor by trade. However, justice overtook him in his career of wickedness; for, in some while after, he being in a riot upon London Bridge, a watchman made a stroke at him with his bill, and severed his head from his body, which head was enclosed in a box, and sent to his sister, who then lived at Wardley, where it hath continued ever since."

Roby, in his *Traditions of Lancashire*, refers to this Wardley legend. After relating the fate of young Downes, and the sending home of his decapitated head, he says: "The skull was removed, secretly at first, but invariably it returned to the Hall, and no human power could drive it thence. It hath been riven to pieces, burnt, and otherwise destroyed; but on the subsequent day it was seen filling its wonted place."

Elsewhere he relates that at Wardley "a human skull is still shown here, which is usually kept in a little locked recess in the staircase wall, and which the occupiers of the Hall would never permit to be removed. This grim *caput mortuum* being, it is said, much averse to any change of place or position, never failed to punish the individual severely which should dare to lay hands upon it with any such purpose. If removed, drowned

in the neighbouring pond (which is, in fact, a part of the old moat which formerly surrounded the house), or buried, it was sure to return; so that, in the end, each succeeding tenant was fain to endure its presence rather than be subject to the terrors and annoyances consequent upon its removal. Even the square aperture in the wall was not permitted to be glazed without the skull or its long-defunct owner creating some disturbance. It was almost bleached white by exposure to the weather, and many curious persons have made a pilgrimage there, even of late years."

In Harland and Wilkinson's *Lancashire Legends*, a quite recent work, the Editor says that when he visited the Hall, some years ago, he found that a locked door concealed at once the square aperture and its fearful tenant. At that time two keys were provided for this "place of a skull," one being kept by the tenant of the Hall, and the other by the Countess of Ellesmere, the owner of the property. Occasionally the Countess would accompany visitors from the neighbouring Worsley Hall, and would unlock the door and show to her friends the Wardley Hall skull. Mr. Wilkinson revisited the quaint old residence in 1861, and again personally inspected this strange relic of mortality. An account of this re-inspection is given in the volume above referred to.

APPENDIX.

BATH.

BATH is veritably honeycombed, even in these realistic days, with inexplicable mysteries. Haunted houses are of common occurrence in Bladud's city, and there are now before us several cases of ghostly doings therein which, for reasons pecuniary or personal, the owners or tenants deprecate direct allusion to. One of the best-known of these troubled homes is in Lansdowne Crescent, and upon the story connected with this building, the number of which we cannot furnish, an interesting romance has been founded by Miss Mary C. Rowsell. The story current in Bath is that every Sunday night, at eleven o'clock, the sound of clashing swords and of angry mutterings is heard outside the doors of the first-floor rooms, and that everyone who has ventured within those rooms at such a time has heard the noises; yet when the doors are opened nothing is seen, nothing is heard.

Another of these haunted houses is in the Villa Fields; but the mysteries connected with it, although alleged to have been detailed at length in a London magazine, we have been unable to fathom. Other tales, more or less

circumstantial, have been related to us of houses in Bath, including one in Henrietta Street, Great Pulteney Street. In this house, some years ago, a man murdered his wife, and left her bleeding corse on the hearth-stone in the kitchen. With foresight rarely displayed by murderers, he locked the front door previous to escaping by the back, which he pulled-to after him. Getting into Great Pulteney Street, he made his way to his residence in Henrietta Street, and attempted to open the front door, or rather pretended to. The door was, of course, locked, so he called a policeman, who forced his way in and found the dead body of the wife. Notwithstanding the man's cunning, the crime was ultimately brought home to him, and, doubtless, he suffered the punishment awarded by law for his crime. The fact, however, which causes us to allude to this conventional story of assassination is, that the tragedy left ineffaceable traces; ever since the ghastly body of the murdered wife was flung upon that hearth the stone there has had stains which cannot be got out. Even new hearth-stones have been put down, but the blood-stains force their way through, and cannot be eradicated!

In *All the Year Round* for January 1868, attention is drawn to the fact that Bath is "a perfect nest of ghosts." Amongst its haunted houses is Jervis House, described as a handsome country seat, possessed of a traditional ghost, and as a building about two centuries old, standing in extensive grounds, within which is a large ornamental lake, with a treeless island in the centre of it. "A gentleman who was on a visit for the

first time at Jervis House, a year or two ago," says this writer, "observed to his host at breakfast, 'I see there is no bridge accommodation with your little island.'

"'None.'

"'I thought, too, you told me you had at present no boat on the lake?'

"'Nor have I,' replied his friend. 'Why?'

"'How, then, do ladies effect the passage?'

"The host hesitated.

"'Ladies?' he repeated; 'do you mean——'

"'I mean, my good friend, that I noticed a lady walking on the island this morning, so early that I wondered at her fancy. She passed entirely round, and crossed it twice, so that I could not possibly be mistaken.'

"'You have seen the Jervis ghost,' said his friend curtly.

"And the subject was dismissed."

Of course, this is a very tantalizing finale, but all our efforts to obtain any further information for the benefit of our readers about Jervis House, or its ghostly tenant, have proved fruitless.

Another narrative told in the same number of the periodical cited refers to another haunted residence in the vicinity of Bath, and is, if equally inexplicable, certainly more blood-curdling. It relates to Barton Hall, and the circumstances are asserted by its narrator to be "perfectly true," and to have occurred but a very short time since (1868) to two young ladies, sisters,

from whom the facts were derived, on the occasion of their visit to the Hall.

"They had retired," says the account, "to the chamber occupied by both, and the elder sister was already in bed. The younger was kneeling before the fire. The door opened softly, and a woman, entering, crossed the apartment, and bent down before a chest of drawers, as if intending to open the lower one. Thinking it was one of the maids, the young lady who was in bed accosted her. 'Is that *you*, Mary? What are you looking for there?'

"Her sister, who was before the fire, had risen to her feet, and turned towards the woman. In the act she uttered a loud shriek, and, staggering back, fell half-fainting on the bed. The other sprang up, and followed the intruder, who seemed to retreat quickly into an adjoining dressing-room. The young lady entered. It was empty.

"Returning to her sister, the latter, who had recovered from her consternation, explained the cause of her outcry. The woman, in turning to meet her, displayed a human countenance, but devoid of eyes."

BOWLAND.

One of those singular dreams, which have attained to historic importance as much by their recorder's position

as their own inexplicable nature, is given in a note to *The Antiquary* by Sir Walter Scott himself. In vouching for the entire authenticity of the story, Sir Walter states that it was told to him "by persons who had the best access to know the facts, who were not likely themselves to be deceived, and who were certainly incapable of deception." He was, therefore, as he remarks of the story, unable "to refuse to give it credit, however extraordinary the circumstances may appear."

Sir Walter's version of the story, with the names, of which he gives only the initials and final letters, duly filled in, is:—

"Mr. Rutherford, of Bowland, a gentleman of landed property in the Vale of Gala, was prosecuted for a very considerable sum, the accumulated arrears of *teind* (or tithe), for which he was said to be indebted to a noble family, the titulars (lay impropriators of the tithes). Mr. Rutherford was strongly impressed with the belief that his father had, by a form of process peculiar to the law of Scotland, purchased these *teinds* from the titular, and, therefore, that the present prosecution was groundless. But, after an industrious search among his father's papers, an investigation among the public records, and a careful inquiry among all persons who had transacted law business for his father, no evidence could be recovered to support his defence. The period was now near at hand, when he conceived the loss of his law-suit to be inevitable; and he had formed the determination to ride to Edinburgh next day, and make

the best bargain he could in the way of compromise. He went to bed with this resolution; and, with all the circumstances of the case floating upon his mind, had a dream to the following purpose. His father, who had been dead many years, appeared to him, he thought, and asked him why he was disturbed in his mind. In dreams men are not surprised at such apparitions. Mr. Rutherford thought that he informed his father of the cause of his distress, adding that the payment of a considerable sum of money was the more unpleasant to him because he had a strong consciousness that it was not due, though he was unable to recover any evidence in support of his belief. 'You are right, my son,' replied the paternal shade: 'I did acquire right to these *teinds*, for payment of which you are now prosecuted. The papers relating to the transaction are in the hands of Mr. ——, a writer (or attorney), who is now retired from professional business, and resides at Inveresk, near Edinburgh. He was a person whom I employed on that occasion for a particular reason, but who never, on any other occasion, transacted business on my account. It is very possible,' pursued the vision, 'that Mr. —— may have forgotten a matter which is now of a very old date; but you may call it to his recollection by this token, that, when I came to pay his account, there was difficulty in getting change for a Portugal piece of gold, and we were forced to drink out the balance at a tavern.

"Mr. Rutherford awoke, in the morning, with all the words of the vision imprinted on his mind, and thought

it worth while to walk across the country to Inveresk, instead of going straight to Edinburgh. When he came there he waited on the gentleman mentioned in the dream—a very old man. Without saying anything of the vision, he inquired whether he ever remembered having conducted such a matter for his deceased father. The old gentleman could not, at first, bring the circumstance to his recollection; but, on mention of the Portugal piece of gold, the whole returned upon his memory. He made an immediate search for the papers, and recovered them; so that Mr. Rutherford carried to Edinburgh the documents necessary to gain the cause which he was on the verge of losing.'

CLIFTON PARK.

In Horace Welby's *Signs before Death*, a work to which we have elsewhere had occasion to refer, the following narrative is given, and in these words:—

"One morning in the summer of 1745, Mrs. Jane Lowe, housekeeper to Mr. Pringle, of Clifton Park, in the south of Scotland, beheld the apparition of a lady walking in the avenue, on the margin of a rivulet, which runs into Kale water. The form resembled a daughter of her master who had long been absent from the family, at the distance of about a hundred miles south of Paris. As Mrs. Lowe walked down the avenue and

approached the rivulet, this resemblance impressed her so strongly that, seeing her master in an enclosure adjoining, she went and told him what she had seen. Mr. Pringle laughed, and said, 'You simple woman! that lady is Miss Chattow, of Morebattle.' However, Mrs. Lowe prevailed upon him to accompany her to the place, which they had nearly reached, when the apparition sprang into the water and instantly disappeared.

"Mr. Pringle and Mrs. Lowe, on returning to the hall, apprized the family of the vision, and for their pains were heartily laughed at. The Rev. Mr. Turnbull, minister of Linton, happened to breakfast that morning with Mr. Pringle, his lady, and two young daughters, who joined in the laugh. About three months afterwards, the same reverend gentleman honoured the family with his company; when, standing at a window in the lower room, he observed a poor, ragged, lame, lean man slowly approaching the house. 'Here comes another apparition,' cried Mr. Turnbull, with a kind of contemptuous smile. This drew the immediate attention of all present, and Mr. Pringle quickly recognised the person to be his second son, whom he had not seen for above ten years.

"On his arrival, he soon convinced them that he was not an apparition, declaring that he had narrowly escaped with his life from Tunis, in the vicinity of which he had been a slave to the Algerines seven years, but had happily been ransomed at the critical moment when he was ordered to be put to death for mutiny. He added, that on his return home through France, he

called at the place where he had heard that his sister resided, and to his unspeakable grief found that she died on the 25th of May, the same summer, about five o'clock in the morning, which he recollected to have been the precise time when he was saved from the jaws of death, and when he thought he beheld his sister. Mrs. Lowe, who was present in the room, on hearing his declaration, added her testimony by affirming that the day alluded to was that on which she had shown Mr. Pringle the apparition; and this was confirmed by the Reverend Mr. Turnbull, in whose study this narrative was found after his death."

EDINBURGH.

UNDER the title of *Aunt Margaret's Mirror*, Sir Walter Scott published a tale, the incidents of which were derived from some circumstances in the early life of the Countess of Stair, wife of John, the second Earl. The author of *Waverley* only related the remarkable events alluded to in a condensed manner, but from various Scottish writers, especially Robert Chambers, we are enabled to furnish the story in a more ample form.

Lady Eleanor Campbell was youngest daughter of James, second Earl of Loudon, and, therefore, granddaughter to that stern old Earl who played so important a part in the affairs of the Covenant, and who was Lord

Chancellor of Scotland during the Civil War. Whilst very young, in the beginning of the last century, Lady Mary was married to James, the first Viscount Primrose. Her husband is described as a nobleman of bad temper and dissolute habits, and is averred to have treated his young wife with great brutality. Eventually his conduct became so outrageous that the unfortunate lady went in fear of her life. One morning, it is stated, whilst she was labouring under this dreadful anticipation, she was dressing herself in her chamber, near an open window; when she saw her husband enter the room with a drawn sword in his hand. He had opened the door softly, and approached his wife with stealthy steps, but she had caught a glimpse, in the mirror, of his face, upon which his horrible resolution was depicted, and before he had time to do her any injury, she leapt through an open window into the street. She does not appear to have sustained any important injury by her dangerous leap, and was enabled, half-dressed as she was, to get to the house of her husband's mother and claim her protection, which was, of course, accorded.

After such proceedings, it was impossible to think of a reconciliation, and, in future, the ill-assorted couple lived apart. Soon after this escapade, Lord Primrose went abroad, and for a very long while Lady Primrose heard nothing whatever about him. During this lengthy separation a foreign fortune-teller, or necromancer, came to Edinburgh, and, among other accomplishments, professed to be able to inform anyone of the present condition or position of any other person in whom the

applicant was interested, irrespective of their distance. Hearing of the marvels performed by this foreigner, and incited by curiosity, Lady Primrose went, with a lady friend, to his lodgings in the Canongate for the purpose of inquiring about her absent husband.

The two ladies, escorted by their servants, duly reached the place of their quest. Lady Primrose having described the individual in whose fate she was interested, and having expressed her desire to know how he was occupied, was led by the conjuror to a large mirror. Upon looking into it, she perceived distinctly the inside of a church, within which, grouped about the altar, a marriage ceremony appeared to be proceeding. What, however, was Lady Primrose's astonishment when, in the shadowy bridegroom, she recognised her own husband, although the bride's face was entirely strange to her! The magical scene thus wonderfully displayed before her bewildered gaze, she described as not so much like a picture, or the delineation of the pencil, as a living, moving tableau of real life. Whilst Lady Primrose gazed, the whole ceremonial of the marriage appeared to be taking place before her. The necessary arrangements had been made; the priest appeared about to pronounce the preliminary service; he was, apparently, on the point of bidding the bride and bridegroom join hands, when, suddenly, a gentleman, whom the party seemed to have been waiting for some time, and in whom Lady Primrose recognised a brother of her own, then abroad, entered the church, and hurried towards the bridal group. At first the aspect of this

person was only that of a friend, who had been invited to the ceremony, and who had arrived late; but when he arrived near the party, the expression of his countenance suddenly altered. He stopped short; his face assumed a wrathful expression; he drew his sword and rushed at the bridegroom, who also drew his weapon. The whole scene then became quite tumultuous and indistinct, and speedily vanished away.

Upon her return home, Lady Primrose wrote out a minute account of the whole affair, and appended to her narrative the day of the month on which she had seen the mysterious vision. This account she sealed up in the presence of a witness and then deposited it in a place of security.

Eventually the absent brother returned home, and naturally went to visit his sister. Lady Primrose inquired if, in the course of his wanderings, he had happened to see or hear anything of her husband. The young man only responded that he wished never to hear that detestable person's name mentioned. Pressed closely by his sister, however, he confessed at last that he had met Lord Primrose and under very strange circumstances. Whilst he was making a stay in Amsterdam he became acquainted with a very wealthy merchant whose only child, a beautiful girl, was the heiress of his enormous fortune. This merchant informed him that his daughter was engaged to a Scotchman of good position who had recently come to reside in Holland, and asked him, as a fellow-countryman of the bridegroom, to the forthcoming wedding. He went, but was

a little late for the commencement of the ceremony, yet arrived, fortunately, just in time to prevent the marriage of the beautiful and amiable young Dutch girl to his own brother-in-law, Lord Primrose!

Lady Primrose had so far succumbed to the prevalent superstition of her time as to write down a full account of the vision she had beheld in the magic mirror, but she was so confounded and overcome when this wonderful confirmation of its truth was revealed to her that she almost fainted away. But one important fact had still to be ascertained. When did Lord Primrose's attempted marriage take place? Her brother was fully enabled to answer this. Upon receiving his reply she took out a key, opened the drawer containing the account of her vision in the mirror, and, handing the manuscript to her brother, desired him to read it. He did so, and found that Lady Primrose's narrative not only tallied in every important particular with the scene he had taken part *in*, but, also, that it was dated on the day that her husband's attempted nuptials were interrupted in the way he had described!

A few words about Lady Primrose's career will not be out of place here. In 1709 her husband died, leaving her still young and beautiful. She had many good offers, but, more than dissatisfied with her experience of the married state, she formed a resolution never to remarry. Among her suitors was the famous Earl of Stair, who for twenty years had made Edinburgh his place of residence. Lady Primrose preferred him to all her wooers, but even on his behalf could not be per-

suaded to relinquish the comforts of widowhood. In order to change her resolution the Earl hit upon an expedient which, as one authority remarks, "certainly marks the age as one of little delicacy." He bribed one of her servants to admit him into her dressing-room, the window of which looked out upon the High Street. At this window, when the morning was somewhat advanced, the Earl showed himself *en dishabille* to the passers-by. The fatal effect which this exhibition threatened to have upon the lady's reputation, induced her to accept Lord Stair for her second husband. As Countess of Stair the lady is said to have had a fairly happy life, especially after she had succeeded in weaning the Earl from over fondness for the bottle. In 1747 she was left a widow for the second time, and in November 1759, after having long exercised sway over the first coteries of the Scottish capital, died there, at a very advanced age.

EDINBURGH CASTLE.

A SINGULAR prophetic, or warning dream, is related and vouched for as "entirely authentic," by Dr. Abercrombie, in his work on *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers*. The Doctor, however, only gives the skeleton of the story and omits the names of the persons concerned. Lady Clerk, of Pennicuik, daughter of the Mr. D'Acre of the dream, communicated

the tale more fully to *Blackwood's Magazine*, in a letter dated May 1, 1826, and beginning, "Being in company the other day when the conversation turned upon dreams, I related one, of which, as it happened to my own father, I can answer for the perfect truth."

Even Lady Clerk's printed narrative, however, is incomplete, as it, also, gives the initials only of the names, but Mr. Dale Owen was successful in obtaining these names in full from a manuscript account of the whole affair by her ladyship, and he succeeded, also, in unearthing, from a contemporary newspaper, *The Caledonian Mercury*, the date of the accident referred to, and particulars of the whole occurrence.

The anecdote is related by Mr. Dale Owen in the following terms:

Major and Mrs. Griffith, of Edinburgh, then residing in the Castle, had received into their house their nephew, Mr. Joseph D'Acre, of Kirklinton, in the county of Cumberland—a young gentleman who had come to the Scottish capital for the purpose of attending college, and had been specially recommended to his relatives' care. One afternoon Mr. D'Acre communicated to them his intention of joining some of his young companions on the morrow in a fishing-party to Inch-Keith; and to this no objection was made. During the ensuing night, however, Mrs. Griffith started from a troubled dream, exclaiming, in accents of terror, "The boat is sinking! Oh, save them!"

Her husband ascribed this to apprehension on her part; but she declared she had no uneasiness whatever

about the fishing-party, and, indeed, had not thought about it. So she again composed herself to sleep. When, however, a similar dream was thrice repeated in the course of the night (and the last time presenting the image of the boat lost and the whole party drowned), she became seriously alarmed, threw on her dressing-gown, and, without waiting for morning, proceeded to her nephew's room. With some difficulty she persuaded him to relinquish his design, and to send his servant to Leith with an excuse.

The morning was fine, and the fishing-party embarked. It consisted of Mr. Patrick Cumming, a merchant, Colin Campbell, shipmate, a boy named Cleland, nephew to Campbell, and two sailors. About 3 o'clock a sudden squall arose from the south-west, the boat upset and foundered, and all were drowned except Campbell, who was picked up after being five hours in the water, almost dead with fatigue. This happened on the 7th of August, 1734, and the affair is narrated, so far as concerns the accident, in the *Caledonian Mercury* for the 12th of the same month.

GLENSHIRAY.

In the First Series of this collection of supernatural stories is given an account of the wonderful apparitional armies seen at Edge Hill some few months after the battle there between the King's forces and those of the Parliament. As then remarked, several

well-authenticated instances are on record of such phantasmal appearances, but as yet no lucid or convincing explanation of the phenomenon has been given.* In some cases these apparitions might be deemed a wonderfully realistic reproduction of real human beings at some distant place, a mirage produced by some natural law that we are not conversant with; but as regards the case of Edge Hill, such an explanation is valueless, the faces and figures of many of the combatants killed in that engagement having been recognised by several spectators.

In the following narrative, related in Ottway's collection of supernatural stories, and in several similar works, the events detailed are not so marvellous, nor so inexplicable as those of Edge Hill; but, nevertheless, are worthy citation in an epitome of this kind. The tale is told thus:

"As you wish to have an account of the vision which my father and grandfather saw in the neighbourhood of this place, I will endeavour to comply with your request. I have heard it, with all its circumstances, so often related by them both, when together, as well as by my father separately, since my grandfather's decease, that I am as fully convinced that they saw this vision, as if I had seen it myself. At the same time I must acknowledge that, however desirous I am to oblige Lady —— and you, I commit this account to writing with some degree of reluctance, well knowing how little credit is generally given, by the more intelligent classes

* *Vide*, also, "Souter Fell," pp. 246–249, of this volume.

of mankind, to a narrative of that kind, and how little it corresponds with the ordinary course of causes and events.

"This vision was seen by them about 8 o'clock in the afternoon of a very warm, clear sunshiny day, in the month of June or July, between the years 1746 and 1753. I cannot go nearer to ascertain the year. My grandfather was then a farmer in Glenary (which you know is within four miles of this place), and my father, who was at that time a young unmarried man, resided in the family with him.

"On the morning of the day above-mentioned, my grandfather having occasion to transact some business in Glenshiray, took my father along with him. They went there by crossing the hill which separates it from Glenary; and their business in Glenshiray having been finished a little after mid-day, they came round by Inverary, in order to return home.

"As soon as they came to Gairan Bridge, and had turned towards Inverness, they were very much surprised to behold a great number of men under arms, marching on foot towards them. At this time the foremost ranks were only advanced as far as Kilmalien. They were marching in regular order, and as closely as they could move, from that point of the new town near the Quay, where Captain Gillie's house now stands, along the shore and high road, and crossing the river Avay near the town, at or about the spot where the new bridge has been since built; of the rear there appeared to be no end. The ground upon which the town now stands was

then surrounded by a park wall. From the nature of the ground my father and grandfather could see no further than this wall; and as the army was advancing in front, the rear as regularly succeeded, and advanced from the furthest verge of their view.

"They stood a considerable time to observe this extraordinary sight, then walked slowly on, but stopped now and then, with their eyes constantly fixed on the objects before them. Meantime, the army continuing regularly to advance, they counted that it had fifteen or sixteen pairs of colours; and they observed that the men nearest to them were marching upon the road, six or seven abreast, or in each line, attended by a number of women and children, both below and above the road, some of whom were carrying tin cans and other implements of cookery, which, I am told, is customary on a march. They were clothed in red (but as to that particular circumstance I do not recollect whether my grandfather mentioned it or not, though I know my father did), and the sun shone so bright that the gleam of their arms, which consisted of muskets and bayonets, sometimes dazzled their sight. They also observed between Kilmalien and the Salmon Draught, an animal resembling a deer or a horse, in the middle of a crowd of soldiers, who were, as they conjectured, stabbing and pushing it forward with their bayonets.

"My father, who had never seen an army before, naturally put a number of questions to my grandfather (who had served in the Argyleshire Highlanders in assisting to suppress the rebellion of 1745) concerning

the probable route and destination of the army which was now advancing towards them, and of the number of men it seemed to consist of. My grandfather replied that 'he supposed it had come from Ireland, and had landed at Kyntyre, and that it was proceeding to England; and that, in his opinion, it was more numerous than the army on both sides at the battle of Culloden.' My father, having particularly remarked that the rear ranks were continually running forward in order to overtake those who were before them, and inquiring into the reason, my grandfather told him that was always the case with the rear; that the least obstacle stopped and threw them behind, which necessarily, and in a still greater degree, retarded the march of those who were behind them, and obliged them to come forward until they had recovered their own places again. And he therefore advised my father, if he went into the army, to endeavour, if possible, to get into the front rank, which always marched with leisure and ease, while those in the rear were generally kept running in the manner he had seen.

"My father and grandfather were now come to the Thorn Bush, between the Gairan Bridge and the gate of the Deer Park, and at the same time the rear of the army had advanced very near to the gate. And as the road forms a right angle at that gate, and the front of the army was then directly opposite to them, they had, of course, a better opportunity of observing it minutely. The van-guard, they then observed, consisted of a party of forty or fifty men, preceded by an officer on foot.

At a little distance behind them another officer appeared, riding upon a grey dragoon-horse. He was the only person they observed on horseback, and from his appearance and station in the march they considered him as the commander-in-chief. He had on a gold-laced hat, and a blue hussar-cloak, with wide, open, loose sleeves, all lined with red. He also wore boots and spurs; the rest of his dress they could not see. My father took such particular notice of him, that he often declared he would know him perfectly well if he ever saw him again. Behind this officer the rear of the army marched all in one body, so far as they observed, but attended by women and children, as I mentioned above.

"My father's curiosity being now sufficiently gratified, he represented to my grandfather that these men, who were advancing towards them, would force them to go along with them, or use them otherwise ill; and he therefore proposed that they should both go out of their way by climbing over a stone dyke which fences the Deer Park from the high-road. To this my grandfather objected, saying that as he was a middle-aged man, and had seen some service, he believed they would not give any trouble to him, but at the same time he told my father, that as he was a young man, and they might possibly take him along with them, he might go out of the way or not, as he thought fit. Upon this my father instantly leaped over the dyke. He then walked behind it for a little time; but when he arrived near the clumps, he looked back to observe the motions of the

army, and found, to his utter astonishment, that they were all vanished, not a soul of them was to be seen.

"As soon as he had recovered from his surprise, he returned to my grandfather, and cried out, 'What has become of the men?' My grandfather, who did not seem to have paid them much attention after my father left him, then observed also that they had disappeared, and answered with an equal degree of astonishment, 'that he could not tell.'

"As they proceeded on their way to Inverary, he recommended my father to keep what they had seen secret, lest they should make themselves ridiculous, for that no person would believe they had seen a vision so extraordinary; at the same time he told him that though he (my grandfather) might not live to see it, my father might possibly live to see the vision realised.

"This conversation was scarcely ended, when they met one Stewart, an old man who then resided in Glenshiray, going home, and driving a horse before him. This, as they believed, was the same animal they had before observed surrounded by a crowd. My father, notwithstanding the admonition he had just received, asked Stewart what had become of the people who were travelling with him. Stewart, not understanding the drift of the question, answered that nobody had been in company with him since he left Inverary, but that he never travelled in so warm a day, that the air was so close and sultry that he was scarcely able to breathe, and that his horse had become so weak and feeble, that he was obliged to alight and drive it before him,

"The account of this vision was communicated by my father and grandfather, not only to me, but to many others in this place and neighbourhood, it being scarcely possible that so extraordinary an occurrence could long be concealed. It is no doubt extremely difficult to account for it, but no person acquainted with my father or grandfather ever supposed that either of them was capable of inventing such a story; and, accordingly, as far as I can understand, no person to whom they told it ever doubted that they told the truth. My grandfather died several years ago; my father died within these two years; but neither of them saw their vision realised, although, indeed, my father had strong expectations of seeing it realised a few years before his death, particularly at the time of the Irish rebellion, and of the last threatened invasion of the French."

NEWARK.

MANY quaint old customs linger in the towns as well as in the country districts of England, and some of them are so ancient that their origin is lost in obscurity. A singular instance of such customs as are alluded to is discoverable at Newark-on-Trent, but, unlike some others, tradition, or rather history, is well able to account for its existence. On the 11th of March every year, penny loaves are given away in this place, at the

Town Hall, to all such poor persons as choose to apply for them. This custom originated in the following way.

During the bombardment of Newark by the Parliamentarian troops under Oliver Cromwell, a certain Alderman Clay dreamed on three successive nights that his house had taken fire. Impressed by the persistence and vividness of these dreams, the worthy magistrate removed with his family to another residence, and a few days later, on the 11th of March, sure enough his vacated house was burnt down by the besiegers' fire. In gratitude for what he considered his miraculous preservation, Alderman Clay, by his will, dated the 11th of December 1694, left two hundred pounds in trust to the Mayor and Aldermen of Newark for the time being. The interest of half this money has to be paid to the vicar annually, conditionally upon his preaching an appropriate sermon, and the interest of the other half has to be expended in bread for distribution among the poor in the way specified above.

WADEBRIDGE.

In the pages of this work, as is seen, are some examples of very wonderful dreams: prophetic dreams, warning dreams, double dreams, or dreams simultaneously occurring to two persons, and dreams of dis-

covery. To the last-named species may be assigned the strange and oft-alluded-to story of the Wadebridge murder. The murder was one replete with commonplace horrors, and would not stand out from the usual category of such crimes but for the marvellous manner in which it was, according to the evidence before us, supernaturally displayed before a person some hundreds of miles away. As the account of this curious *cause célèbre* is given very circumstantially by Dr. Clement Carlyon (in his *Early Years and Late Reflections*), and as, after sifting the case thoroughly, he avers "its unquestionable authenticity," it is better to quote it in his exact words. Dr. Carlyon's account is as follows:—

On the evening of the 8th of February 1840, Mr. Nevell Norway, a Cornish gentleman, was cruelly murdered by two brothers, of the name of Lightfoot, on his way from Bodmin to Wadebridge, the place of his residence. At that time his brother, Mr. Edmund Norway, was in the command of a merchant vessel, the *Orient*, on her voyage from Manilla to Cadiz; and the following is his own account of a dream which he had on the night when his brother was murdered:—

"Ship *Orient*, from Manilla to Cadiz.

"February 8, 1840.

"About 7.30 p.m., the island of St. Helena N.N.W., distant about seven miles; shortened sail and rounded to with the ship's head to the eastward; at eight, set the watch and went below; wrote a letter to my brother,

Nevell Norway. About twenty minutes or a quarter before ten o'clock, went to bed; fell asleep, and dreamt I saw two men attack my brother and murder him. One caught the horse by the bridle, and snapped a pistol twice, but I heard no report; he then struck him a blow, and he fell off the horse. They struck him several blows, and dragged him by the shoulders across the road and left him. In my dream, there was a house on the left-hand side of the road. At four o'clock I was called, and went on deck to take charge of the ship. I told the second officer, Mr. Henry Wren, that I had had a dreadful dream—namely, that my brother Nevell, was murdered by two men on the road from St. Columb to Wadebridge, but that I felt sure it could not be there, as the house there would be on the right-hand side of the road; so that it must have been somewhere else. He replied: 'Don't think anything about it; you west-country people are so superstitious. You will make yourself miserable the remainder of the voyage.' He then left the general orders and went below. It was one continued dream, from the time I fell asleep until I was called, at four o'clock in the morning.

"EDMUND NORWAY,
"Chief Officer, Ship *Orient*."

Thus ends the Captain's account of his dream.

The confession of William Lightfoot, one of the assassins who did really murder Mr. Norway, and who was executed, together with his brother, for the

crime, at Bodmin, on the 13th of April 1840, is as follows:—

"I went to Bodmin last Saturday week, the 8th instant (February 8, 1840), and in returning I met my brother James at the head of Dummer Hill. It was dim like. We came on the turnpike-road all the way till we came to the house near the spot where the murder was committed. We did not go into the house, but hid ourselves in a field. My brother knocked Mr. Norway down; he snapped a pistol at him twice, and it did not go off. He then knocked him down with the pistol. I was there along with him. Mr. Norway was struck while on horseback. It was on the turnpike-road between Pencarron Mill and the directing-post towards Wadebridge. I cannot say at what time of the night it was. We left the body in the water, on the left side of the road coming to Wadebridge. We took some money in a purse, but I did not know how much. My brother drew the body across the road to the watering."

The evidence of various witnesses called at the trial of the assassins proved that the murder must have been committed between ten and eleven at night.

Dr. Carlyon, in concluding his account of this dream, remarks, "It will be seen that Mr. Edmund Norway, in relating his dream the following morning to his shipmate, observed that the murder could not have been committed on the St. Columb road, because the house, in going thence to Wadebridge, is on the right hand, whereas the house was, in his dream, on the left. Now,

this circumstance, however apparently trivial, tends somewhat to enhance the interest of the dream, without in the least impugning its fidelity; for such fissures are characteristic of these sensorial impressions, which are altogether involuntary, and bear a much nearer relation to the productions of the daguerreotype than to those of the portrait-painter, whose lines are at his command."

MISCELLANEOUS.

CAPTAIN BLOMBERG'S APPARITION.

In the following extraordinary account of an apparition heard, if not seen, by two persons at once, the exact locality where the appearance took place is not stated, but the story is well known and often alluded to, and, therefore, deserves publication here. The Dr. Blomberg, to whom the tale refers, is said to have been a celebrated metropolitan clergyman, in the early part of this century. When Blomberg was a boy, his father, Captain Blomberg, was stationed with his regiment in Martinique.

One day the Captain was ordered to a distant part of the island with some important dispatches. The barracks at head-quarters, where the absent man had been residing, were just then very crowded, and, in consequence, the officers had to share their apartments with one another, in order that all might be housed within the barracks. One night, shortly after Blomberg's departure, the door of one of these apartments was heard

to open, and the noise awakened the two occupants. One of them, a friend of the absent Captain, raised himself in bed, and, to his intense astonishment, beheld Blomberg approach the bedside, and draw back the mosquito curtain.

"Why, Blomberg," said he, "what on earth has brought you back?"

Blomberg looked at him for a few seconds, with a melancholy and abstracted air, but at last said distinctly—

"I died this night, and I have come to ask you to take charge of my little orphan boy."

He then gave his friend the address of the child's relatives in London, and asked him to have the boy sent to them at once, adding that the papers necessary to establish the boy's claims to some property would be found in a certain drawer which he designated. This communication made, the visitant departed, closing the door after him with an audible sound, and leaving the friend deeply perplexed. Calling out to the occupant of the other bed, he asked him if he had heard anyone in the room.

"Yes," was the reply, "was it not Blomberg? What did he want?"

The first officer then asked his companion if he had not heard what Blomberg had said, but he answered that he had merely heard the sound of his voice. At breakfast next day the two officers recounted the extraordinary affair to their companions, and were, of course, heartily laughed at for their pains. In the evening,

however, a message arrived that put a speedy stop to their merriment. Captain Blomberg, so they were informed, having given way to depression of spirits in his solitude, had fallen into a fever, and, on the very night and at the very hour in which the apparition had appeared to his friends, had succumbed to the disorder.

The friend to whom the apparition appeared was deeply impressed, and noted down the strange communication which he had received. He sent the boy over to London, to the stated address, which proved to be that of the relatives; and had search made in the drawer designated by Blomberg's apparition, and there, sure enough, were found the deeds which proved the child's title to the property.

This wonderful affair acquired a widespread notoriety and at last reached the ears of Queen Charlotte. Her Majesty was greatly interested, and at once ordered the child to be received into the royal nursery, where, indeed, he was brought up under the direct care and superintendence of his royal benefactress.

Dr. Blomberg, it is stated, was remarkably lax in his ideas of the Sabbath, being so devoted, according to report, to his fiddling, that he kept a greased bow for Sunday playing. But it generally follows, whenever anyone has acquired a reputation for some "uncanny" connection or the other, rumour attributes all kinds of unconventional things to him or her.

SMELLIE AND GREENLAW.

POST-MORTEM assignations are among the most frequent and best-known form of ghostly visitations. The instances recorded of dead men keeping appointments made with living friends are so numerous that it is easy to select from them many unimpeachable cases. Such a case is that given in the biography of William Smellie, author of the *Philosophy of Natural History*. Smellie's most intimate acquaintance was William Greenlaw, a man of great probity, and who, after having gone through the usual theological studies, and taken orders in the Church of Scotland, for certain conscientious reasons refused a living when it was offered to him, and sought his subsistence by teaching the learned languages.

In the course of their long and close friendship Smellie and Greenlaw entered into a solemn compact in writing, and even formally sealed it, and signed it with their blood, whereby both mutually engaged, that whoever died first should return, if possible, and give the survivor an account of the spiritual world. A proviso was made that if the deceased did not return within the expiration of twelve months, it was to be concluded that he was unable, or not permitted, to come back.

Greenlaw died on the 26th of June 1774. When the anniversary of his death drew near Smellie became exceedingly anxious about the expected visit, and lost several

successive nights' sleep, in watching for his deceased friend's reappearance. At last, one evening, worn out with fatigue, Smellie would appear to have fallen asleep in his easy chair. The apparition of Greenlaw, clad all in spectral white, now appeared to him, and in a solemn tone informed him, "That he had experienced great difficulties in procuring permission to return to this earth, according to their agreement; that he was now in a much better world than the one he had left; and yet that the hopes and wishes of its inhabitants were by no means satisfied, as, like those of the lower world, they still looked forward in the hope of eventually reaching a still happier state of existence."

This spiritual communication is said to have completely satisfied William Smellie, and to have quite removed from his mind all further anxiety on the subject of the agreement. He related the whole story, and showed the blood-signed agreement, to the eccentric but learned Lord Monboddo; that nobleman observed there could not be the slightest reasonable doubt or hesitation in believing that Greenlaw did actually appear.

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